THE CATECHISM TODAY

INSTRUCTIONS ON THE CHURCH CATECHISM

Rt. Rev. C. ASHTON OLDHAM, D.D.
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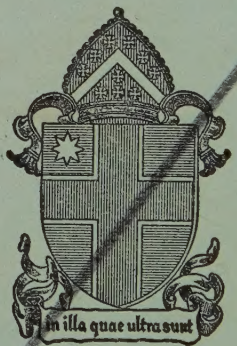

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Instructions on the Church Catechism

BY THE

RT. REV. G. ASHTON OLDHAM, D.D.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

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THE CATECHISM TODAY

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Instructions on the Church Catechism

INTRODUCTION

IS THE Catechism out of date? Yes, and no. So far as some of its words and phrases go it is certainly somewhat old fashioned. But as a brief and clear summary of the essential articles of the Christian faith it is as valuable today as when it was written. But whether it is out of date or not is for us rather a profitless discussion, for after all it is the only Catechism we have. Therefore, the wise course of procedure would seem to be to make the most of it as it is. This is to be the attitude of these chapters. No attempt will be made to go into its history nor to justify or defend it from any point of view, but merely to expound it, and suggest some of its implications.

My own experience leads me to believe that without any unnatural interpretation whatever, it can be applied in the most practical manner to present-day conditions. For many years I have prepared Confirmation Classes, ranging in numbers from thirty to ninety, the course of instruction extending over at least two weeks,

and though I have examined carefully every manual for preparation I have been able to find, and always with the hope of discovering a new and better way, I have invariably fallen back on the Catechism as the basis of my class instruction for young and old alike. All of which convinces me that Mother Church, in her corporate wisdom, is wiser than any of her children and that the old Catechism on which our parents and grandparents were reared is capable of training equally well the present generation. Doubtless it could be improved. Doubtless much might be added and some things omitted. But let us take it just as it is and make full use of it and we shall find that, like Holy Scriptures, "It is its own best witness." It will justify itself.

Just at the outset I wish to correct the very prevalent though erroneous impression that the Catechism is meant only for children. It is equally valuable and necessary for adults. Simple it is, to be sure, as are the principles of any science, but that simplicity is the result of the work of master minds and, just as Newton's laws of motion are so simple that a child can understand them, yet absolutely essential for everybody to comprehend before he can take a single forward step into the realm of physics, so the principles of the Catechism are essential for all who desire to make any progress in the Christian Faith. Moreover, if rightly presented, adults will take to it as cheerfully and willingly as do children. The fault is ours, not theirs, if they have received the impression that it is only for children, and we must correct this impression as quickly as possible. Perhaps, once more, the Church knew

best, and perhaps she meant what she said in the title page of the Catechism which reads: "An instruction to be learned by every person before he be brought to be confirmed by the Bishop." That sentence was doubtless carefully framed, and when it says "every person" it means more than "every child."

That it can be properly presented to and appreciated by adults was strikingly shown by the late Bishop Paret of Maryland, who related the following experience: "A Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States made an application for confirmation, and I asked him whether he knew the Church Catechism. 'I thought that was for children; it is so very simple. Am I required to recite that?' 'Not to recite it,' I answered, 'but to know it, and I am sure you will consent to this. It is indeed very simple; the simplest text book of the alphabet. But it needs a master in any science to prepare its text books, and the simpler the text book the greater the need for thorough knowledge in the writer. And it needed a great master in theology to prepare this Catechism. Familiarity with it is as necessary to Christian knowledge as familiarity with the alphabet and the multiplication table is necessary for knowledge of any literature or of mathematics. You had to be examined as to your knowledge of the elementary things of the law before you were admitted to the bar. You would not admit to the bar any man, however eminent in other matters, without the elementary knowledge. I do not ask you to recite it. But I do want you to know it; and you will find it one of the greatest helps to your better appreciation of Christian truth. I ask

you to go over it, more than once, thoughtfully, and I want to show you how.'

"Then taking the Prayer Book, I marked out for him in the Catechism its five great subjects: The Christian Covenant, the Christian's Faith, the Christian's Duty, the Christian's Prayer, and the Christian Sacraments, and I asked him to take each by itself and go over it several times, not parrot-fashion, but truthfully, to master its meaning; and I added, 'I shall be satisfied with your assurance that you have done so.'

"'You are right,' he answered, 'and I will do it.'

"The same method was followed with an admiral, a general, and an eminent senator. Each of them cheerfully consented. And some two years later the Judge said to me, 'I can never be too grateful to you for making me learn my Christian alphabet. I can now read my Bible much more clearly.' "

The Catechism may truly be called the Christian alphabet, and just as we should never expect to become intelligent readers or students of literature without having first learned the alphabet, so we cannot hope to have intelligent Christians and Churchmen unless they master the principles that "in the shorter Catechism are contained." Without exaggeration it may well be called the most remarkable product of a very remarkable time and is well termed by Isaak Walton: "That good, plain, unperplext Catechism that is printed with the old Service Book." Perhaps, however, it has never received higher commendation than from that spiritual seer and scholar, the late Archbishop Benson, who said: "I believe that there has never been in the hands of any

Church any manual representing the doctrines, the true spirit of the Bible, to compare with the Catechism of the Church of England." Such is the document we shall endeavor in simple fashion to make real and applicable to the life of today.

THE CATECHISM ANALYSED

RIGHTLY to understand any literary work we must first of all analyse it to determine its natural and logical divisions. The Catechism naturally and easily falls into five familiar divisions: The Christian Covenant, the Christian Creed, Christian Duty, Christian Prayer, and Christian Sacraments. (Young people will easily learn and remember these divisions if they are reminded of the thumb and four fingers of their hand; the first division, the Covenant, underlying the whole Catechism and thus standing as it were a little apart from the other, may be well represented by the thumb, the remaining divisions by the four fingers.)

These five themes or subjects, however, are not simply indiscriminately thrown together but have a logical and vital connection. To alter the order would spoil the whole and, therefore, this arrangement shows some evidence of clear thinking and mayhap of genuine inspiration. For example, the Covenant between God and man is the basis of all the rest. A covenant, however, involves faith both in the sense of belief and of trust, for one could not make an agreement with one about whose existence he was in doubt or on whose character he could not rely. Consequently the first thing which

must logically follow a Covenant with God is some expression of our belief or faith in Him and this we have in the Apostles' Creed.

Belief or faith, moreover, to be of any value, must express itself not only in words, but in deeds. As a mere intellectual statement it may be utterly barren and futile, so far as any effect upon our lives is concerned. Such, indeed, is often the case both with individuals and Churches. To paraphrase an old rhyme:

> They live for themselves and die for themselves,
> For themselves and none beside;
> Just as if Jesus had never lived,
> As if He had never died.

What the world wants and what we want and what God wants is not a dead but a living faith, a faith, in other words, that really affects our conduct. Someone has well said that: "A conviction is a belief that makes a difference." Consequently the compilers of the Catechism showed real spiritual and psychological insight when they placed immediately after the Creed the standard of the Christian's duty. This order, I feel sure, was no mere coincidence and it affords a most vital and practical teaching point, the importance of which should not be overlooked. It sets forth the principle that belief is meant to influence character and our faith is to be evident in our works. Christian faith must result in the Christian life.

But when we apprehend clearly the exalted standard that is held up for us we become conscious of our utter inability to attain it. The more clearly we see it and

the more earnestly we strive to reach it the more evident does it become that in our own strength we are unequal to the task. Like St. Paul, we are conscious of "another law in our members," and the things we would, we do not, and those we should not, we do. Consequently, we are inevitably driven to seek outside help and as soon as this need is experienced the Church takes us gently by the hand and leads us into the vast domain of prayer. Real prayer is possible only to those who experience a sense of need. The self-satisfied or self-sufficient person knows neither its needs nor its value.

But once we experience our helplessness we are ready to turn to God in prayer.

Here again, then, we have a perfect, logical sequence. The order could not possibly be changed. First the ideal is presented, then comes the striving and consequent sense of need which results in our stretching out our hands in supplication to our Heavenly Father. To live the Christian life without God is ridiculously impossible, as anyone may discover by sincerely making the attempt. Logically and naturally, therefore, is Christian duty followed by Christian prayer.

Once more, the earnest Christian frequently discovers that even with his utmost efforts combined with fervent prayer, he is unequal to the task set before him. Happy is he who, in that case, knows where to turn for further help. To large numbers of Christians there is nothing more. But, thank God, we belong to a branch of the Church that has a sacramental system and has never lost its faith in the efficacy of sacraments. More will be said of this anon, but suffice it now to suggest,

without pressing the distinction too far, that in prayer man is approaching God, while in the sacraments God is approaching man. Unlike those persons who would be more spiritual than Christ himself, the Church teaches us that God condescends to meet man in his upward strivings and give him spiritual food and sustenance to help him on his journey, and this He does through simple and ordinary channels. Thus do the Christian sacraments follow naturally and logically upon Christian prayer.

Hence, the whole Catechism is a unity. Its several parts fit into one another in natural and logical order. The sequence could not be changed without seriously dislocating the whole. Under the guidance of the Church the child of God goes naturally from step to step in a gradually unfolding and deepening experience. God Almighty makes His agreement, reveals His nature, sets forth a standard, encourages man to seek His help, and co-operates by giving him His very life that he may ultimately come to say with St. Paul: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Thus the system is complete and the simple Catechism stands before us as: "A body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part."

THE CHRISTIAN COVENANT

THE covenant idea runs all through Scripture and for that matter all through life. All men have obligations, whether recognized or not, to their fellows, to the state, to parents, friends, business associates, and to God. A religious covenant, like any other, is simply an agreement, entered into freely by both parties. God, of His Grace, initiates the covenant and asks man to enter in. God, on His part, promises certain things conditioned on man's making corresponding promises. The obligations and privileges are mutual, and this implies distinct and free personalities. Note how clearly this is all brought out in the first section.

"What is your name?" is the way the Church begins; and this reminds us strangely of God's first question to man in the Garden of Eden: "Adam, where art thou?" God is interested in individuals, in persons. Among all the myriads of persons in the world and the multitude of worlds, I am a matter of concern to God. I can never be a matter of indifference to the infinite Deity. What a tremendous truth this is! Whatever I do or think or say really and deeply interests Him. The most tragic and dangerous position a man can ever be in is to be or feel so alone that "nobody cares." That position the Christian need never reach, for no

matter what the attitude of men, every individual soul is an object of solicitude to God.

But this must not be taken merely in a sentimental sense. God cares too much for us to pamper and spoil us. He cares so much that he wants to bring out the best that is in us. He cares enough to be angry and to punish and discipline His children, if need be, in order to develop their higher nature. In short, He treats us as immortal souls with an eternal destiny.

God respects my personality, my individuality. Having given me free will, He does not take back the gift. This puts a great responsibility on me. In the ultimate issue I must stand on my own feet and answer for myself. No man can save his brother. Perhaps nothing is more needed in these days than a clearer recognition of this sense of individual responsibility. We are constantly putting the blame for our failure on someone or something else, heredity, environment, circumstances, and what not. We need to realize the full force of the truth that: "To his own Maker each one standeth or falleth." For all that I have done or left undone; for all that I have made or failed to make of my particular combination of qualities, I must some day answer to God. Somewhere in His archives the great Artist of the universe has a picture of me as I was intended to be—as I was capable of becoming had I constantly and persistently followed the upward path. What deeper pain can be imagined than to see, as some day I must, that picture side by side with the picture of myself as I really am! Should not this, then, make us all with the poet, long and fervently cry:

O for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be!

"What is your name?" implies all of this and much more. It reminds us in brief that God is interested in persons. He is neither an individualist nor a Socialist, but a personalist.

Likewise, the Church is interested in persons. Theoretically at least—despite our too-frequent emphasis on machinery and gold—the Church believes in the infinite worth of each individual soul and so she makes very careful provision to see that the children committed to her care shall be properly instructed until they come to years of discretion. She seems to leave nothing to chance. The normal teachers of the child, his father and mother, might die or become negligent. Accordingly, the Church officially appoints private tutors and lays upon them their solemn duty. For a boy she appoints two men and one woman, and for a girl, two women and one man. Thus, including the parents, there are five persons duly and solemnly appointed to look after the child's spiritual welfare. Could the Church have provided more wisely or thoroughly? And yet, what a formal and meaningless travesty has this institution become! How many sponsors have any remotest conception of this as their duty! Yet such is the evident and clearly expressed mind of the Church.

Surely here is a point where we are in dire need of reform. With sponsors selected for purely social reasons and frequently with no regard whatever to their faith—whether it be that of the Church or some other

denomination or, for that matter, of any definite Christian faith at all—small wonder that our young people are being lost to the Church. Sponsors must realize that they undertake a most serious and solemn duty before God and that they are not released from such duty and obligation until the child has become of age and taken it upon himself in the way our Church expects, viz, in the presence of the bishop and in connection with the solemn laying on of hands. Let clergy and laity alike do their utmost to rescue from its present state of disgraceful perversion this splendid, sane, and practical provision of the Church for the Christian nurture of her children.

THE BAPTISMAL VOW

"They did promise and vow three things in my name."

THE sacramental aspect of holy baptism will be considered later. Just now, I want to point out simply the significance, not of the sacrament but of its covenant obligations. The usual interpretation, helpful and true so far as it goes, falls far short of its full significance. But let us consider that first, for just a moment. Here, as always, God takes the first step and initiates the Covenant by making the recipient of baptism "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven"—all of which, however, is conditioned on the promises and agreements of the child. These promises as made by the sponsors are three-fold: "First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; Secondly, that I should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith; and Thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life."

All this sounds rather quaint and ancient and unsuited to modern life. But put very briefly, it simply

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means that man on his part promises repentance for the past, faith in the present, and obedience for the future: in response to which God gives pardon, grace, and eternal life. Putting it even more simply, as I do for the children, the child (through its sponsors) promises: (1) To give up what is wrong, (2) To believe what is true, and (3) To do what is right; and God in turn promises to forgive, to sustain, and to reward and bless. Put thus, it seems clear, simple, and reasonable.

But unfortunately we have all fallen into the habit of interpreting these words in a merely negative sort of way. We stress the first promise to such an extent that it is not strange that the average young person conceives it to be almost the whole of his duty and consequently thinks of religion as perpetually saying "Thou shalt not." Accordingly it interests him less and less as time goes on, and rarely arouses in him any real enthusiasm. That such emphasis was not originally intended by the Church is evident when we consider in connection with these vows the words in the baptismal office with which she officially receives the child. "We receive this Child into the congregation of Christ's flock; and do sign him with the sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end."

What a rebuke and contradiction do those words constitute to the average conception of the baptismal obligation! Most parents think of baptism merely as

something that may be "good for the child" in that it assures him of eternal life in some mechanical though mysterious fashion. Their thoughts as a rule are occupied chiefly with the benefits to the child now that he has come within the "ark of salvation" and scarcely at all with the obligation on his part. Little thought is there of the necessity of co-operating with Divine Grace, or if there be it usually confines itself to things which must *not* be done. How different, however, are these express words of the Church! There is here no emphasis on negations, but all is positive, stirring, militant. The child is bound to confess the faith, to fight against its foes, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant until the very end.

How like is this to the soldier's enlistment. In the first of the King's Regulations of the British Army, it states that every enlisted man has "undertaken a definite liability for service." Is not this splendid phrase a fair interpretation of the Church's words in the baptismal formula? And if so, ought we not to stress this thought more than we do?

The curse of much present-day Christianity is that, as far as conduct is concerned, it consists almost entirely of negations and, therefore, it has lost, as Mr. Clutton-Brock says, "its power of coherence, its joy, its laughter." The average man thinks of a Christian as one who does not do certain things instead of as one who does. We tend in practice to interpret the golden rule according to Confucius: "Do not unto others as you would not have them do unto you," instead of according to Christ who bids us "Do." We need to

change our emphasis if ever we are to become an aggressive and conquering Church.

Let every parent realize that in baptism he is enlisting his child in an army, enrolling him as a soldier whose duty it is to fight for God and His Cause, and because it is going to be a hard and ceaseless struggle altogether beyond his own strength, he will need to receive something of God, not for his own good but in order that he may be a good soldier of Jesus Christ! Suppose each child were baptized in this spirit and suppose parents universally followed up the child's baptism by teaching and training him for his work as a fighter, wholly committed to the Cause of his King, what a Church we should have in the next generation!

BELIEF

NOW THAT the Covenant has been entered upon we naturally want to have a clear idea of what is involved and expected of us, and so we come first of all to the Articles of our Belief. And right here is the step which many persons nowadays hesitate or refuse to take. So before considering the Creed itself I want to say a few words about belief.

"It doesn't matter what you believe so long as you lead a good life," is a statement often heard, and large numbers of apparently intelligent people accept it as true, not stopping to realize how very foolish and false it is. For not only in religion but in any walk of life man's conduct is conditioned by and follows upon his belief. The little child, for example, believes at first that a hot stove will not burn and acting on that belief he suffers accordingly. The boy believes that green apples will do him no harm. He accordingly eats a goodly quantity and suffers the consequences. One man takes as his motto, "let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die," and he becomes a glutton or a drunkard. Another thinks that "business is business" and, being guided by no strong convictions or principles of honor, becomes a trickster or an embezzler. Some

persons do not believe in virtue, honor, idealism, while others believe them to be the most important things in life, and each one acts accordingly. No matter how learned or how ignorant a man may be, his beliefs profoundly affect his conduct. As he believes he acts.

Indeed, all life on its intellectual side may be said to consist in the acquirement of right beliefs. We begin by thinking that the earth is flat and stationary, and that the sun rises and sets. We have to learn the opposite. Students begin with very crude and erroneous conceptions of science, and their whole education consists in changing false or partial beliefs into true and complete ones. Just in proportion as this is done do they experience the profound insight of that word of the Master: "The truth shall make you free."

Religion, like science, is in search of truth, and to refuse to make the search is to leave unexplored the greatest domain of knowledge. Here, too, men begin with very crude and childish ideas of God, and these must be gradually changed and clarified until we arrive at a true and worthy belief. Here, too, just as in all other walks of life, it *does* matter very much what a man believes. The real danger and sin of believing in a false God lies not merely in the belief but in the consequent wrong action which follows. The partial and erroneous conceptions of God held by the ancient Romans and Greeks, by Mohammedans and Buddhists, resulted in conduct which has stamped itself ineffaceably on their civilizations. When men believed God was indifferent to virtues they were indifferent. When men thought God wanted human sacrifices they offered them.

When men thought of God as a great Pharisee they tried to imitate Him. When they conceived Him as a cruel despot they became cruel. Always and everywhere is it true that men become like the gods they believe in and worship. Hence a false conception of God is the greatest of all evils, since it is the cause of all spiritual and moral decay and perversion in nations and in men, while, on the other hand, a true conception of God is man's greatest need. What we think of God is, indeed, the most important of all questions. Ultimately it is the only thing that matters, for upon its answer depends all that men do and are and are becoming.

While doubtless it remains true that God cannot be apprehended by the intellect alone it is also true that He cannot be known without it. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind" surely implies mental effort, and we do God and ourselves small honor if we fail to exercise our minds in an endeavor to find and know God. Well says Mr. Gilbert Chesterton: "The human brain is a machine for coming to conclusions. If it cannot come to conclusions it is rusty. When we hear of a man too clever to believe, we are hearing of something having almost the character of a contradiction in terms. It is like hearing of a nail that was too good to hold down a carpet, or a bolt that was too strong to keep a door shut. Man can hardly be defined, after the fashion of Carlyle, as an animal that makes tools; ants and beavers and many other animals make tools in the sense that they make an apparatus. Man can be defined as an animal that makes dogmas. As he piles doctrine on doctrine and conclusion on con-

clusion in the formation of some tremendous scheme of philosophy and religion, he is, in the only legitimate sense of which the expression is capable, becoming more and more human. When he drops one doctrine after another in a refined skepticism, when he declines to tie himself to a system, when he says that he has outgrown definition, when he says that he disbelieves in finality, when in his own imagination he sits as God, holding no form or creed, but contemplating all, then he is by that very process sinking slowly backwards into the vagueness of the vagrant animals and the unconsciousness of the grass. Trees have no dogmas. Turnips are singularly broadminded."

Let us then have done, once and for all, with that shallow, slothful, slovenly dictum that, "It doesn't matter what one believes." The statement is a lie and is of the devil. Most of the persons who use it do not really mean it. Rather is it an excuse to relieve them of the necessity of hard thinking or still harder conduct. Let not our impatience with false dogmas blind us to the supreme value of true ones. Let us in our religious life endeavor to be as wise as the children of this world and press on through illusion and delusion to ever clearer and more adequate conceptions in that greatest field of undiscovered knowledge, which is—God.

TRI-UNITY

IF you are going on a journey you do not take all your household goods along, nor, if you wish to travel quickly and comfortably, an array of trunks. Instead you select the few really essential things and put them in a bag or suit case. So, for ordinary mortals on the journey of life, a great amount of baggage is neither necessary nor desirable. Consequently, the Church has seen fit to collect the few great essentials of our Faith and present them to us in compact and portable form in what are known as the Creeds. They do not tell us all about God but they do give us the essentials.

The one great truth underlying the Christian Creeds—the thing that differentiates Christianity from all other religions—is that of the three-fold nature of God, the Trinity or Tri-Unity. Dividing the word thus indicates its essential meaning and also the only safe method of approach. We must come at the Trinity through the Unity and not vice versa. Neglect of this important truth results in making millions of Christians actually polytheists. They worship three or at least two gods, not one. To avoid this danger we must follow the order of God's revelation in history. "The

Lord our God is one God" was the message to Israel, unchanged for centuries. It seemed as if it must be reiterated everlastingly until it had become so seared on men's hearts and minds that they could never forget it before they were ready for the further revelation of God's nature. Hence it is very dangerous to teach persons the doctrine of the Trinity before they have thoroughly grasped that of the Unity. If err we must, probably the error of Unitarianism is fraught with lesser evils than that of polytheism. Fortunately, however, we are not confined to either of these alternatives.

The doctrine of the Trinity was the product not of man's speculations, but of his experiences. The Apostles and the early Church had come into contact with an unique Personality whom they could only account for as divine. Later, at Pentecost and after, they had another wonderful experience which could be explained on no mere human grounds. Hence, in their conception of God they had to make room for these facts. Accordingly, they were forced to modify their definition and conclude that God was not an undifferentiated but rather a composite Unity. They had to define God so as to include and account for all their experiences of contact with Deity. Jesus Christ was God. The Holy Spirit was God. Hence, God's unity was not simple but complex—in fact, a Tri-unity or Trinity.

The full meaning of this we cannot and need not know. But it is neither an unreasonable nor useless belief. Huxley truly says: "The doctrine of the Trinity is not more puzzling than the antimonies of physical nature," and surely we might expect the na-

ture of God to be more of a mystery than physical nature. We need not, however, feel under the necessity of taking merely a defensive attitude towards this doctrine. Rather may we be bold enough to take the offensive. It is not only compatible with belief in God, but it makes such belief easier. Indeed, without this wonderful revelation, it would seem impossible to believe in God as a Person at all. It was for this reason that when the Greek philosophers first heard of it they were elated and exclaimed in effect: "Why that is just the truth we have been seeking—the truth that gives us a rational basis for belief in a Personal Deity." If God is living, He must create, reproduce; if God is love, He must have an object. Consequently a living and loving God must be more than a barren Unity. The doctrine of the Trinity, therefore, rightly understood both safeguards and explains the personality of God.

Analogies are numerous and familiar. One of the most suggestive is that of Professor Tyndall, who discovered the three rays of light—the heat ray, felt but not seen; the light ray, seen and felt; and the actinic ray (made use of in photography), neither seen nor felt. So we have the Father, felt, not seen; the Son, both seen and felt; and the Holy Spirit neither seen nor felt, but manifest in His works. Another, used by the late Dr. William Reed Huntington, consisted in putting scientific terms in the Athanasian Creed as follows: "Coal is carbon, graphite is carbon, diamond is carbon, and yet there are not three carbons, but one carbon." Any chemist would subscribe to that trinity. But per-

haps one of the most helpful illustrations is the following, used by Bishop Gore. As one looks at some high mountain it appears from a distance to be but a single peak. But on drawing nearer, the single peak is seen to change until when one gets quite close, it is seen to consist of three distinct peaks, which at a distance look like and actually constitute a single mountain. So God seen through the perspective of the Old Testament is one God, but as God and man approach each other, man discovers other lineaments in the picture, other qualities in the Godhead which he can only adequately describe under the term Trinity or Tri-unity. Such is the highest revelation of God for man in this world—a conception in accord with reason and of the greatest practical value. Even if we don't understand it—as who of us can?—we may at least bow down in awe and worship and adore. In this respect the Athanasian Creed is perhaps superior to all others when it says: "The Catholic faith is this: that we *worship* one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity." As says an ancient mystic: "Happy is he who seeks not to understand the mystery of God, but who, merging his spirit into Thine, sings to Thy Face, O Lord, like a harp; understanding how difficult it is to know—how easy to love Thee."

Perhaps we cannot more fittingly conclude this brief study than by quoting the words of the poet Heine: "Ah, my child, while I was yet a little boy, while I sat upon my mother's knee, I believed in God the Father, who rules up there in heaven, good and great; who created the beautiful men and women thereon;

who ordained for sun, moon, and stars their courses.

"When I got bigger, my child, I comprehended yet a great deal more than this, and comprehended and grew intelligent; and I believe on the Son also, on the beloved Son who loved us and revealed love to us; and for His reward, as always happens, was crucified by the people.

"Now, when I am grown up, have read much, have traveled much, my heart swells within me, and with my whole heart I believe on the Holy Ghost. The greatest miracles were of His working, and still greater miracles doth He even now work: He burst in sunder the oppressor's stronghold, and He burst in sunder the bondman's yoke. He heals old death wounds and renews the old right; all mankind are one race of noble equals before Him. He chases away the evening clouds and the dark cobwebs of the brain, which have spoilt love and joy for us, which day and night have lowered on us."

GOD THE FATHER

"First, I learn to believe in God the Father."

In these days when in some quarters men are clamoring for shorter and simpler creeds it is interesting to note that the Church in her Catechism interprets the Creed for children in the simplest and shortest possible form and in this brief series of papers I shall take advantage of this condensed summary. In reply to the question: "What dost thou chiefly learn

in these Articles of thy Belief?" the Catechism says: "First I learn to believe in God the Father Who hath made me, and all the world." Let us consider only this today.

"God, Who hath made me, and all the world." Thus simply and without argument does the Church answer the most profound question of human life. Whence did I come? Whence did this world come? What is the Cause of things? Whence the beauty, order, vastness of the universe? Who made it? The sufficient and only answer is God.

> What tho' in solemn silence all
> Move round this dark terrestial ball;
> What tho' no real voice or sound
> Amid their radiant orbs be found.
> In reason's ear they all rejoice
> And utter forth a glorious voice;
> Forever singing as they shine
> The hand that made us is Divine.

Here it is important to distinguish clearly between fact and method. The *fact* that God made the world is doubted by few, but when we attempt to say *how* He made it we are plunged into controversy. Fortunately the *how* is not a matter of faith. Although individuals have had their opinions and centuries of bitter conflicts have raged about that question—all that the Church requires us to hold is the fact that *God made the world*. Whether He made it in six days or a hundred thousand or million years; whether He made it by direct fiat of His will or through a thousand of intermediaries; whether the Genesis story interpreted as lit-

eral history or the theory of evolution be the method matters not one whit. Christians may hold any theory consistent with their knowledge and enlightenment, provided they do not rule God out. Here then is a common standing ground for the greatest scholar and the most ignorant child. Whatever different opinions they may have as to the *method* of creation, each may say from his heart that the maker of all is God.

"God the Father" adds another thought. The God of Christians is not simply a first Cause, an impersonal Force. He is a Person, which does not mean that He is just a greater man—a sort of benevolent, patriarchal old gentleman sitting upon a throne. Such an idea may be necessary for artists and helpful with children, but it is not the Church's conception, though many scholars, either ignorantly or willingly, assume that it is and forthwith proceed to attack the Church. Never has the Church taught any such notion. On the contrary the first of our Articles of Religion tells us: "God is without body, parts, or passion." So we must have a definition of "personal" in accord with that. Persons are in essence spiritual beings and the abiding elements of personality are not physical but spiritual. Man is a being having volition, thoughts, emotions; in other words, he has a mind, a heart, and a will.

These qualities, like everything else in the universe, must have had a cause and it must always be remembered that the cause of everything must be at least as great as the effect. When a magician puts a few feathers in a bag and after some mysterious words and passes brings forth a pigeon, we know it is a trick, as the

effect is too great from such a cause. So when we find, in addition to all the wonders of the material universe, the great mystery of personality, we are logically driven to assume that the ultimate Cause, which must be at least as great as the effect, must therefore be personal. Hence, we believe God is a Person—that He possesses Will and Mind and Heart.

But the phrase we are considering dwells chiefly on the heart. God is a Father. At the great center of things is Love. This cannot be proved. It must be felt and experienced. But so many thousands have experienced it that it partakes of the nature of proof. The One who experienced it most clearly was Jesus. Before His time men thought of God chiefly as a Sovereign, Ruler, Lawgiver, Judge. Jesus brought Him nearer by using almost exclusively the term Father. He spoke rarely of God's majesty or power but nearly always of His love. "Your Father knoweth the things you have need of." "Not a sparrow falls without your Father." "After this manner pray ye: Our Father." God is the Father of the prodigal in his wandering, of the woman in her sin, and, indeed, of all mankind.

Men not only did not understand this before Christ's day, but they have been slow to accept it since. They have toned down and distorted His teaching and have erected their old gods made after their own imaginations —such as the God of Calvinism, the God of Vengeance, the author of disease and death. Christ's message seems too good to be true. What we need today is a new insistence on the full glad teaching of the Christ that the Almighty Creator of all the universe, the great mys-

terious Power at the source and center of things, is not force or mind or will, but preëminently love. God is Love.

A charming story is told of a child dwelling in a beautiful home without father or mother but with a retinue of servants to satisfy and anticipate every wish. For some years the child was content simply to accept and enjoy all these gifts. But one day he commenced to wonder who was responsible for them all. Whose thought and love had contrived so beautiful a home? On pressing for an answer he discovered that behind the physical comforts and pleasures and the attentions of servants was the will and activity of a loving father. So we older children some day grow tired of the pleasures and interests of this world and endeavor to peer beneath the surface to discover Who is responsible for it all. Who has contrived this wonderful universe and placed us in it? Who or What is behind things? And the only answer that satisfies us is that given by the Church: "God the Father, Who hath made me and all the world."

GOD THE SON

"Secondly, in God the Son, Who hath redeemed me, and all mankind."

THE SECOND paragraph of the Creed declares our belief in God the Son. The historical clauses are simply an amplification of that fact as set forth in Holy Writ. We shall confine ourselves to the central fact.

"No man hath seen God at any time," says St. John, and probably no one will doubt that statement. Of old, men saw manifestations of God, e. g., Moses at the burning bush, and Elijah at Sinai, but no one ever did or will see God. Our senses discern only physical things and God, who is Spirit, can never be seen by the eye of flesh. Man can never know God in His essential Being. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite.

Nevertheless, man has always wanted to see God. All through the ages he has been groping and searching. "If haply he might find Him." The psalmist's plaint: "O that I knew where I might find him," is the supreme and constant utterance of mankind. One astronomer searches the heavens to find God, without result; while Kepler longs to "find in his own soul the god whose manifestation he discovered everywhere without." The search for God is man's eternal quest.

On the other hand God wishes to be found and is ever revealing and expressing Himself. He reveals Himself in nature, and to the eye of faith: "Every common bush is aflame with God." He reveals more of Himself in man and especially in the choice souls and spirits of every race. He has nowhere left Himself without witness. Throughout all eternity the "Word" or active principle of Deity has been expressing, revealing Himself. This truth finds utterance in the Nicene Creed in the phrase: "By whom all things were made," though it is not generally recognized that the antecedent of the pronoun "Whom" is "Jesus Christ," Who was the active agent at the creation and all through the process. God was putting Himself into

His world—as much as it could contain. More and more He gave as time went on. He inspired Moses and the prophets; He inspired men of other religions. Justine Martyr spoke of Pato and others as "those who lived according to the Logos before Christ." According to the Epistle to the Hebrews, God has been revealing Himself "in divers portions and in divers manners" until at last He finds full entrance in the Person of Jesus Christ. It is as if the tide is gradually rising and surging, forcing its way through, in this place and that, until at last it bursts in full flood over the embankment. Or as if the sun is gradually piercing the mist and fog, shooting a ray now here, now there, when suddenly the fog lifts and we stand bathed in glorious radiance. So the Incarnation was prepared for. It is the point of time where "love broke through," where God found Himself a home in human nature. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth."

This glorious truth is not a hindrance but a help to faith. You cannot believe in God the Father unless you also believe in God the Son. It is the essence of personality to communicate itself, the essence of love to give. If God, therefore, is a loving Person, He must reveal and give himself to His creation. So strongly did this truth impress Phillips Brooks that he said: "If there had not already been an Incarnation, there must be one some time." God could not forever leave men in the dark, not if He be a God of love. If there

is no Incarnation then we may believe in God as a Principle or Force or First Cause, but not as a loving Father.

It is our belief in God the Son that both evidences and justifies our conception of God as a loving Father.

This then is the essential meaning of the Incarnation. God in his essence is unknown and unknowable (at least by man). Man, nevertheless, wants to know God and God in turn wants to be known. God, therefore, reveals Himself to man in a form that he can grasp—viz, that of a Man. In the person of Jesus Christ, God walks in and out among men, showing them exactly what He is like. This is the meaning of that significant saying of our Lord: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." In other words, He says: "If you want to know what God is like, look at Me. If you want God's portrait, here it is!"

Thus does God answer man's most puzzling question and satisfy his deepest instincts. In the words of Browning:

> 'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for.
> My flesh that I seek in the Godhead.
> I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be
> A face like my face that receives thee,
> A man like to me
> Thou shalt love and be loved by forever;
> A hand like this hand
> Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee.
> See the Christ stand.

GOD THE HOLY GHOST

"Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, Who sanctifieth me, and all the people of God."

God is Spirit. He always has been and always will be. Even while "manifested in the flesh," He did not cease to be Spirit. This is His essential nature. Behind all things and causing all things is Spirit. Truly, says St. Paul, "The things which are not, bring to nought the things that are." We use learned words, such as cohesion, attraction, molecular energy, gravity, and often think we have put our fingers upon the secret of things, forgetting that these terms are all abstractions and the things they connote are invisible, spiritual entities. This universe of ours swims in a larger universe of spirit. Out of the unseen all things come and dwell awhile in the seen and tangible, only to return again to the invisible. As said Plotinus of old: "It is more true to say that the body is in the soul than that the soul is in the body." Likewise St. Paul quotes with approval the line from the Greek poets: "In Him we live and move and have our being."

Consequently this doctrine of the Holy Spirit reminds us that we dwell in a spirit-hung universe and that the ultimate forces are spiritual. The world of modern science is not the dead mechanical world of a generation or so ago. Instead, matter in its essence is discovered to be of so tenuous a character as scarcely to be distinguished from spirit. The world is no longer a mechanism, but a living organism, shot through and through

with spirit. God does not act upon it miraculously and occasionally from without but naturally and regularly from within. "Are we sure," asks Sir Oliver Lodge, "that the guidance and control (of nature) are not really continuous instead of being as we expected, intermittent? May we not be looking at the working of the Manager all the time and at nothing else? That is the lesson science has to teach theology—to look for the action of the Deity, if at all, then always; not in the past alone, not only in the future, but equally in the present. If His action is not visible now, it never will be and never has been visible."

Hence the Holy Ghost stands for God active in the present; it stresses the frequently neglected but most potent truth of the Divine Immanence. God is in every part of His creation, animate and inanimate, upholding and sustaining it every moment:

> God in the soil, in the rock, in the sea,
> God in the animal, God in the tree,
> And God forever in you and in me.

With wonderful prophetic insight spoke the psalmist: "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." But we need not go so far afield. "He is not far from any one of us." We have only to retire into our own hearts to find Him. As says St. Augustine: "Thither one journeyeth not in ships, nor in chariots, nor on foot; for to journey

thither, nay even to arrive there, is nothing else but to will to go." "Be still then and know that I am God."

Christians believe, then, in a living, present, active Deity. Too many worship a God who did noble works only in their fathers' days and in the old time before them. Too many worship and revere a Man who lived and died two thousand years ago. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit should save them from such errors and bring to them the glorious truth that God is living and working today; that, indeed, the Master's own saying is being literally fulfilled: "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to the Father." In this materialistic age no truth needs greater stress than that of the immanent, indwelling Divine Companion:

> Speak to Him, thou, for He hears,
> And spirit with spirit may speak.
> Closer is He than breathing
> And nearer than hands and feet.

Finally, the Holy Spirit is not a mere vague, general influence but is personal. This is not, however, to be interpreted as though He were a third God, as is the thought of many Christians, due to a mistaken orthodoxy. The Holy Spirit is personal because He is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and by means of the Spirit's activity God through Christ finds His way into the believer's heart. "If any man do my will, we will come unto Him and take up our abode with Him."

> "O Christ," I used to say, "help me to come to Thee!"
> But can I say it now, when Christ hath come to me?
> Dear Presence in my soul, where Thou hast found Thy rest!

Why seek Thee in the skies, Who dwellest in my breast?
The mother seeks her child, when wayward it doth roam;
But seeking hath no place, when it is safe at home.
His Name is on my lips; His tear bedews mine eye;
His home is in my heart; He cannot be more nigh.
O no! He is not now a Christ that lives apart;
But near as life with life, He dwells within my heart.

FAITH

HAVING considered very briefly the chief Articles of our belief, it will be well to pause here a bit to consider more fully the meaning and nature of "belief" itself. We have already seen the absolute necessity of belief of some kind in every department and activity of life. Let us now consider what the term signifies, for there are few words so misused and misunderstood. Belief and faith are constantly confused and treated as if they were the same thing—often with lamentable results. So, at the outset, I want to make a clear distinction between the two. Clear thinking here will be of much value.

Belief, in itself, may be nothing more than a mental activity—the assent of the mind to a proposition as, e. g., that $2 + 2 = 4$, that Albany is the capital of New York, that God exists, that Jesus was an historic character. All these are clear-cut propositions to which the mind may assent, and, whether the subject-matter be religious or otherwise, the act of assent or belief is one and the same.

Such beliefs may be true and valid and yet sterile. They may be held without question and yet have no influence upon one's life. For while correct beliefs are

essential to right living, they do not compel it or necessarily result in it. Henry VIII and Leo X were thoroughly orthodox theologians but their lives would scarcely be called Christian. "The devils believe and tremble," was said of old, and today it may be said of countless multitudes of orthodox Christians that "they believe and do nothing"—not even tremble! And just because of this, many persons are disgusted with "belief" or dogma—"dry dogmas," "useless dogmas," they call them—and we cannot very much blame them.

The trouble is that all such persons, both professing Christians and critics, have mistaken "belief" for "faith" and have stressed belief as a purely intellectual activity as if it were the whole. Of course, the acquiring of true views about God is of the utmost importance, nevertheless that alone is of little value. The mere holding of correct intellectual conceptions about God never saved anyone, and never will. The only "belief" that has value for God or man is a "belief" that makes a difference, that issues in right living; and such belief is an activity not of the mind alone but of the whole nature. A better term for it is "faith" or "trust."

Here, too, is apparent the confusion between "belief" and "trust" or "faith." But while both may and should co-exist, they do not always, and it will be a help to clear thinking to realize that the two are not identical. The difference cannot well be defined in words but may perhaps be suggested by the following illustration. A group of surgeons were listening to one of their number describing a very delicate and critical operation. They listened with admiring approval and all agreed that the

thing could be done. Into their midst suddenly came a man, who had just arrived from a distant city, saying: "I am suffering from such and such a malady, which requires a very critical operation. I am told you are the man who can perform it. I place myself in your hands." The assent of the doctor in the first instance was belief, the act of this man, "faith" or "trust."

Faith is akin to trust—the trust of the little child, who, placing his hand in his father's, thus learns to walk. The child who does not trust its parents can receive nothing from them. The schoolboy who has no faith in his teacher is not apt to learn much. So the Christian needs faith in the sense of trust, which enables him to place himself in an humble and receptive attitude towards God and so receive great gifts. Faith, then, in the full Christian sense, is a complex activity including belief, trust, affection, involving, in short, the whole nature—mind and heart and will, and so profoundly affecting the life.

The great essential thing to bear in mind is that Christian faith is concerned not with things but with a Person. The Christian Creeds are but the frame protecting the picture, the scaffolding about the building, the shell or husk that conserves the life within. Mere acceptance of all the propositions of the Creeds falls far short of Christian faith, which must press on to behold the picture itself, and pierce the husk to get at the life within. The Creeds tell us *about* a Person, but it is the Person, Himself, we want to know and love.

In this attachment to a Person rather than to things lies the dynamic of Christian faith. The citizens of any

country, for example, may believe strongly in their constitution and support it to the very best of their ability, which is well enough so far as it goes. But when the embodiment of that constitution in the person of their sovereign appears, a new conviction now throbs and pulsates in every heart. Hats go in the air, hurrahs are shouted, emotions are stirred and enthusiastic devotion called forth. Such is the difference between "belief" and "faith."

Belief has to do with the intellect; faith with the whole man. Belief is concerned with propositions; faith with persons. Belief sees, faith takes hold; belief says: "This man speaks the truth"; faith says: "I take this man for better for worse . . . till death do us part." Belief says: "Lord, Lord"; faith says: "My Lord and my God." Belief says: "I believe in God"; faith says: "My God, My God." Belief says: "God is omniscient"; faith bows down in awe. Belief says: "God is holy"; faith falls down and worships. Belief says: "God is righteous"; faith tries to be righteous too.

CHRISTIAN DUTY

CHRISTIAN DUTY is the subject of the third division of the Catechism. Duty is not so popular a virtue as one might wish, nor does it seem to be held in quite as high esteem as in some earlier days. As a people we seem to prefer thrill to drill and ardor to order. We are keenly interested in talking about Covenants and Creeds, and even Prayer and Sacraments, but not quite so anxious to apply them to our lives.

> We would have hatred cease,
> But will not cease from sin;
> We would have inward peace,
> But will not look within;
> We would have all good ends,
> But shrink from all harsh means.

But after all, the whole purpose and value of Creeds is that they shall affect our lives. "Faith without works is dead" and the sole reason for our learning the truth is that we may live it. Consequently, the order of the Catechism is perfect. After learning the truth we learn what it involves. We are not only to profess but to *live* our Creeds. As soon as we learn what is wrong we must avoid it, and what is right we must do it. Hence we pass logically from faith to duty. Duty, in-

deed, is one of the finest words in our language. It includes all the virtues and concerns all our lives.

> I slept and dreamed that life was beauty.
> I woke and found that life was duty.

The Christian's duty is set forth in the Ten Commandments, which, however, must be interpreted in a Christian and not a Jewish sense. This interpretation is given tolerably well in our Catechism in "My Duty towards God" and "My Duty towards my neighbor." But even these need some reinterpretation in terms of our own day. On the whole, however, they express the mind of the Church and form a good commentary on the Decalogue.

The Decalogue, it must be remembered, was given to a primitive people. The Israelites were a wandering, desert tribe but recently released from bondage. They were children in religion, and just as we teach children today largely by saying "Don't do this or that," so these ancient laws are mainly negative, telling them the sins they must avoid. In this respect the "Duty" is better, since it is chiefly positive. Moreover, the Decalogue in part deals with sins which were a special temptation to the Israelites and in that respect may not always apply today. Its underlying principles are eternal. Let us consider them.

THE DECALOGUE

The First Commandment

"Thou shalt have none other gods but me."

My duty towards God is to believe in Him, to fear Him, and to love Him, with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength.

THE Commandments are divided into two parts or Tables. The Jews made the division equal because they considered duty to parents a religious duty. Today, however, we consider that more of a social duty and so we make the division after the fourth commandment. The first four tell us of our Duty towards God, and the last six, our Duty towards our neighbor.

The first and second commandments seem very much alike and are often confused today. Indeed, some branches of the Christian Church combine the two into one. Our Church, however, separates them and I think we can see a real and important distinction.

The first commandment warns against the sin of Polytheism and the second against Idolatry, and the two things are quite distinct. Polytheism means the worshiping of many gods, while Idolatry means the worshiping of even the true and only God in the form

of an image or idol. Both these commandments, therefore, deal with worship—the first telling us *Whom* we should worship and the second, *how* we should worship.

"Thou shalt have none other gods but me" is our Prayer Book version. In the Bible this reads, "Thou shalt have none other gods *before* me," which latter phrase, in the margin of the Revised Version, is explained to mean "Beside me" or "in addition to me," hence our Prayer Book really expresses it very well in saying "Thou shalt have none other Gods but me."

When this commandment was first given, men believed in many gods. Each nation and tribe had its own god and this was true even of the Israelites. They, however, had to learn that there was really only one God in all the universe and they were taught this gradually by first ignoring all other gods and then coming to realize that after all they were really no gods. Thus Israel grew from the idea of first thinking of their God, Jehovah, as the greatest of all the gods, into the idea that He was the only God and consequently not only their God but everyone's God. This commandment therefore teaches us that there is only one God who made the world and everything and everybody in it and who sustains and supports it today. It is an echo of the very first words of our Bible, "In the beginning, *God*," and of the first words of our Creeds—"I believe in God," "I believe in one God," and also of the first words of the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father." Its teaching is that there is just one God who is our Creator and our Father. All that we have and are comes from Him. Therefore, He alone should be the object of our worship.

But what has this to do with us today? Of course, in savage lands there are people who worship other gods and we send missionaries there to teach them the truth. But here, in civilized America, we are in no danger of doing any such foolish thing. Let us not be so sure. We may not go to a temple, or fall down upon our knees, or make any signs of outward devotion to any other god, but we may still worship even without any outward signs. The word worship is akin to "worthship" which means the thing we consider of most worth, and it is a serious question for any of us—old or young —to ask himself: What do I value most in life? What do I put first? If we look about us we will see many who put other things before God. Some put money, devoting all their lives and thought and energy to making as much money as they can, neglecting not only God but all the higher things of life such as good books, music, art, etc. They are not even always careful as to the way in which they make their money, often doing what they know to be wrong. Such people worship money. Some worship pleasure. Instead of going to God's House on His day to worship Him, you will see them going off to the country on picnics just as if they had never heard of God. They put pleasure before God. Others put food or drink or ambition first. Others, again, put friends in the first place and allow their influences to draw them away from the things that are true and pure and lovely. Some put reason in place of God. They are too interested in physics or botany or art or music or literature to have any time to devote to God.

Thus in a thousand ways we are tempted today, as

were the Israelites of old, to worship other gods. This commandment meant God *first*, and whenever we value anything more than God, we are breaking this commandment. God will not accept a divided allegiance. He must be first or nowhere. Therefore our Lord interprets this commandment—and so does our Catechism —in positive form: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." If we love Him with all our heart, we shall endeavor always to set our affections on things above and so put Him first. If we love Him with all our souls we shall come to learn the truth of that profound saying of St. Augustine: "Thou hast made us for Thyself and our souls are restless until they rest in Thee." If we love Him with all our mind, no intellectual pursuit or pleasure will ever lead us from Him but instead we shall bring all our thoughts into captivity to Jesus Christ. If we love Him with all our strength, we shall strive our utmost to "fight manfully under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue His faithful soldier and servant until our life's end."

Second Commandment

"*Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image . . . thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them.*"

> To worship Him, to give Him thanks, to put my whole trust in Him, to call upon Him.

The first commandment tells us of the true and only God, whom we must worship. The second tells us of

the nature of true worship. The first warns us against Polytheism, i. e., worshiping other gods. The second warns against idolatry, i. e., worshiping the true God in a false or wrong way, such as the worshiping of images or idols. This commandment like all the others was originally brief—they were called, you know, the "Ten Words." We shall therefore consider only its underlying principle.

On the surface the commandment does not seem to have any real application today. We know of course that the heathen fall down and worship images of their gods, idols, but we, of course, would never think of doing such a thing. Nevertheless, I think we shall soon see that in principle it still applies and carries a warning that is much needed.

Of course, we are not to take this commandment to mean—as some have—that we are forbidden to make images at all. That would mean that it is wrong to carve a statue or paint a picture or make a photograph. Nor does it forbid the use of these things to beautify our Churches or even as symbols or aids to devotion. Those who, like the Puritans, at one time thought so, must have overlooked the very important qualifying phrases "to thyself" and "thou shalt not bow down and worship them." Otherwise Cromwell and his friends could not have destroyed and desecrated beautiful Churches, smashing windows and chopping down all the carving. Had these men known their Bibles better they would have known that God not only permitted but actually commanded the beautifying of His house in this manner. In the Old Testament we read of the

designer and maker of beautiful symbols that the Lord has "filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship." (Ex. 31:3.) Moses, also, was commanded to make a brazen serpent and it was only destroyed later when it ceased to be a symbol and became an object of worship itself. Hence it is a right and true instinct which makes us adorn our churches with beautiful windows and carvings and paintings both as objects of beauty and aids to devotion. This also is in accord with modern psychology for, as Browning well says, "Nor soul helps flesh more than flesh helps soul." The danger lies in giving such things undue prominence, but this is a danger common to all departments of life. There is no more necessary idolatry in reverencing the Altar or bowing to the Cross than there is in saluting the Flag or the Quarter-deck.

Rightly to understand what this commandment in principle forbids we must realize that the real danger in worshiping an image lies not in the image but in the false or partial *conception* of God which arises therefrom. No image can adequately represent God. Hence to worship an image means to engender in the mind a false or partial idea of God. Thus, the real sin and evil of idolatry lies not in the idol but in the mind of the worshiper. This commandment therefore warns against any wrong *mental image* of God. So interpreted, it applies to us all. To conceive of God, as Calvin did, as condemning innocent infants to eternal torture, or on the other hand, as many do today, as merely sentimentally good-natured; or to think of Him

as a Partisan, interested only in our own special welfare, or as a great Oriental Despot, a stern judge, a God of Vengeance, One who visits horrible afflictions on His children, or even to think of Him as blind, impersonal Force or as abstract Principle—in any or all of these ways we may create and worship a false God, whether we have an idol in front of us or not.

Again we transgress this commandment by superstition—and what a lot of that there is today! Ignorant people, to be sure, believe in luck, but so do a large number of apparently educated Christians. They are superstitious about Friday or 13 at a table. They hang up horse shoes, carry lucky stones, and dabble in astrology and fortune-telling. Some apparently intelligent people even believe that a piece of wood, called a ouija board, can give them helpful advice and others consult so-called "mediums," not to get a better knowledge of God or how to live a better life, but merely to satisfy curiosity. All such persons are guilty of breaking the spirit of this commandment. They are setting up an idol of their own creation, and rendering to it the worship which belongs only to God. The real harm of such false worship lies not so much in its effect on God as in its effect on man. God can stand the slighting of His honor better than man the evil effect on his life. Men become like the gods they worship. Hence the importance of a true, worthy, and adequate idea of God and a clear appreciation of the nature of true worship.

True worshipers, said our Lord, are they, who worship God "in spirit and in truth." This is the only

worship He values or desires and the only worship of any value to man. Whether forms be few or many, ritual simple or complex, does not really matter. What does matter is the attitude of the heart. Christians must avoid superstitious practices, they must beware of formalism in worship. The only true object of worship is God; the only proper kind of worship is "in spirit and in truth."

Third Commandment

"Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain."

To honor His holy Name and His Word.

The first commandment taught us to believe in and worship the true and only God. The second taught us the nature of true Worship. The third commandment stands for the proper spirit of worship—reverence, not only to God Himself, but to anything pertaining to Him. Let us try and see first what this commandment meant to the Jews.

The name of any person or thing had great significance for the Jew. It represented character. Abraham's name was changed from Abram to Abraham when his character changed. Jacob, meaning supplanter, was changed to Israel, "Perseverer with God," when his character changed and warranted it. So, the various names for God changed as the Jews learned more of His character. First the word "El," meaning the Self-existent One, was used—this occurs about 250 times in the Old Testament. The word "El Shaddai," meaning omnipotent, almighty, came later. Then, Elohom and

later Jehovah, which latter name was held so sacred that no Jew, save the High Priest once a year, would pronounce it, so that today no one knows how it was pronounced. This reverence for the Name was due to the fact that it stood for character, represented God, Himself.

Originally the commandment had a two-fold meaning as shown in Lev. 19, 12: "Ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of the God. I am Jehovah."

The first, is a prohibition of perjury and all lying. It does nor forbid the taking an oath in court. In early civilization and in our Lord's day, that was a common custom and our Lord Himself once took such an oath. Men called God solemnly to witness that they were telling the truth, and this commandment says that when they do that, they must be very sure that they are telling the whole truth. This custom still prevails in our law courts and, sad to say, there is a great deal of perjury, or lying, not only to men but to God. Perjury is a sin both against God and man and no state of society can last long unless the members thereof tell the truth.

Christians, of course, are supposed to have passed beyond the necessity of this law. They are expected to live so constantly in the presence of God that they do not need to call Him to witness that they are speaking the truth, for, being always conscious of His presence, they will strive never to tell a lie even in the smallest things. This is what our Lord meant when He said: "Swear not at all . . . but let your Yea be Yea and your Nay, Nay."

The second thing forbidden by this commandment is profanity. How much of that there is today! Among the Jews both perjury and blasphemy were punishable by death, since the one struck at the heart of the State and the other at the heart of Religion. Both sins come from the same root, viz, a lack of reverence for God. The liar thinks God is indifferent to truth, the blasphemer, that He can be flouted with impunity. Reverence, therefore, is the virtue for which this commandment stands, and true Reverence is very far reaching. It includes, of course, the condemnation of what we know as profanity, or the taking of God's name in vain, but it also includes a great many other things. It forbids all disrespect for holy things, the Church, the Bible, etc. All irreverent jokes on holy things, jests about the Bible, parodies of sacred things, such as the horrible "Mock Marriages," irreverence in word or act in God's House, lightly partaking of the Holy Sacraments, saying prayers we do not mean or professing creeds we do not believe. How much we need this warning today, and especially among protestants! Said a noted Presbyterian preacher lately, "I cannot resist a painful impression that much of our current religion errs through want of reverence. We come with unprepared minds to the holiest services. We dogmatize conceitedly about the most awful mysteries of life and of the faith. We thrust forward a rash hand to prop the tottering ark of God. We prattle glibly, with an easy familiarity, about the names of Persons before Whom archangels bow . . . A spirit inwardly sensitive of the real solemnity of God—a

heart that secretly bows down in earnestness before the holiness of Him who is utterly and inconceivably above us—a silent shrinking of the soul from any rash or light familiarity with One, the latchet of whose shoes, even while He walked the earth, none of us was worthy to untie—this would be a happy improvement on much that offends in modern Protestanism."

In its deeper meaning this commandment goes farther still. Since all things come from God and He is All in All, we should cultivate the habit of seeing Him in His creation and in our fellow men. William Blake once said, "I assert for myself that I do not see the outward creation and that to me it is a hindrance . . . What, it will be questioned, when the sun rises do you not see a disc of fire somewhat like a guinea? Oh, no, no! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God, Almighty." We should also reverence our fellow men made in the image of God. One noted American is said never to have opened a letter from his wife without first washing his hands, and it is told of Stonewall Jackson that he never placed a stamp on a letter without offering a silent prayer.

Reverence, then, is the great lesson of this commandment. Reverence first for the Creator Himself, His Name, and all connected with Him, His Church, His Word, His Sacraments, His children, ourselves—a recognition of the fact that all the world is in reality a vast Sanctuary, created by God, redeemed by God, and indwelt and sustained by His Holy Spirit.

Fourth Commandment

"Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day."

To serve Him truly all the days of my life.

The first commandment has shown us the true object of worship, the second the true nature of worship, the third the spirit of worship or reverence which should permeate all our lives. The fourth provides a time for common or public Worship. We might put it this way —God first, God only, God revered and God worshiped. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day.

The Sabbath is a Mosaic institution, but the principle of one day's rest in seven is almost as old as man. At one time the week consisted of ten days, as among the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Greeks, and others, but later these changed from ten to seven. The Romans at one time had a week of eight days but also changed to seven. In very recent times the French instituted a week of ten days but had to go back to seven. So it seems evident that as man is constituted he needs a rest day one day in seven. Indeed this seems to be true even of animals. The owner of a street railroad told me that instead of keeping six horses to make up three teams they kept seven so that one should rest once each week. He said they found that the horses lasted much longer and so it paid. All of which shows that God knows what is best for man and when He commanded His ancient people to observe one day in seven as a rest day or holy

day, He was thinking not only of His own honor but of His children's welfare.

The Sabbath was, however, not only for rest from work. It was intended to give man an opportunity for worship so that he should not forget that he had a soul and a God. It was part of an elaborate system by which men were to be kept in remembrance of God. The whole nation of Israel was set apart to God. Of the nation, the tribe of Levi was especially set apart, and of that tribe the Family of Aaron, and of that family a High Priest. Then there was the Temple in which were the outer court, Holy Place, then the Holy of Holies. Also the first fruits, the firstlings of animals, tithes etc., all were reminders. "Consecrated men, consecrated property, consecrated space, consecrated time declared that God still claimed the world as His own, and that in all the provinces of human life He insisted on being recognized as Lord of all."

Thus originally the Sabbath was a day of Rest and a day of Worship, and, because both rest and worship should be happy, a day of joy and gladness. In later times, the learned Jews spoiled it somewhat and made the day a great burden and this later burdensome, man-made Sabbath is what some Christians try to make of our Lord's Day. But we are not Jews and we do not and should not keep the Sabbath. The Sabbath was the seventh day; Sunday is the first. The Sabbath commemorated Creation; Sunday the Resurrection of our Lord. The early Christians, who were also Jews by race, at first observed both days. As Jews they went to the Synagogue or Temple on the Seventh Day and as

Christians they met together on the First Day or Sunday for worship in honor of Christ's Resurrection. Sunday then was a working day so they had to meet early in the morning before going to work for the "Breaking of the Bread" or the Holy Communion, which was the first Christian Service. Not until about three centuries later was Sunday made a holiday by the Emperor Constantin. During all this time, the two days continued side by side, both being observed by Jewish Christians, but from this time onwards the Christians had their own day of worship—Sunday, which they called the Lord's day. Hence Christians no longer keep the Sabbath nor are they bound by the many petty restrictions of later Judaism. The underlying principles of the original Sabbath are of course eternal and they should and do find their proper expression in the Christian's weekly day of rest and worship.

The principles which should guide Christians in the observance of Sunday are three: Rest, Worship, and Charity. Rest was the primary purpose of the Sabbath and it is necessary for both man and beast. So, Sunday is meant to be a day of rest. But this does not mean inaction. Loafing in bed, eating a late and hearty breakfast, followed by a heartier dinner, and most of the day spent with the Sunday newspaper is good neither for soul nor body and is not at all in accord with the purpose of this commandment. Recreation, in the strict sense of the term, is what is needed. For the laboring man or artisan who works with his muscles, this may mean some real resting of his body and some good reading, listening to some good music, or looking at some

good pictures. For the man who works at a desk all week, it may mean some healthful outdoor exercise to recreate his body. Each one must decide this for himself, guided by the principle of true recreation of the whole man—body, mind, and spirit.

Worship is an essential purpose of the Lord's day. As stated above, the early Christians worked all the day but met early in the morning for worship. At first that was the sole purpose of the Day. Consequently, no person has properly observed the Lord's day who has not devoted at least a portion of it to worship. A great many Christian people do not realize this. They think that if they simply do *not* do certain things on that day, they have observed the day. But most of these things are man-made, while they are neglecting the one Divine feature of the day, the very thing for which it was originated, the worship of God. It cannot be too strongly stated that whatever else one does or does not do on Sunday, unless at least a portion of it is devoted to the public worship of Almighty God, it has not been kept in a manner pleasing to Him or most helpful to the individual. The beasts of the field can loaf, a savage can indulge in games or dances, but civilized, Christian man is expected to make a better use of this beneficent opportunity. Man is a child of God. During the week he may be too busy to remember this as often as he should, and, therefore, the good God has given him one day in seven to recall the fact that he has an immortal soul that needs both nourishment and exercise. Fifty-two of these precious opportunities are given us in

a year, some 3640 in an average lifetime—each constituting a rung in that ladder by which we may mount from earth to Heaven.

Charity is the third guiding principle. During the week we all have too little time to do the many kind deeds to which we are prompted, the call on a lonely neighbor, the reading to some sick shut-in, the letter to a rather heartsick father or mother—the thousand and one kindly neighborly deeds which we say we would like to do if only "we had more time." All these may properly be done on Sunday. This principle of Charity also indicates the kind of amusements that are lawful on this day. A railroad excursion that deprives the trainmen of their Sunday, or transacting ordinary business that keeps shopmen at their counters, or the playing of games that keep attendants at clubs or thousands of boys out of Church and Sunday School—these are not in accordance with this principle of Charity.

With these guiding principles, the Christian should be able to use this day properly, that it may prove a blessing both to himself and others and an honor to Almighty God. A part of the day for Rest, a part of the day for Worship, and a part of the day for works of Charity—these are the ways in which the well-instructed Christian will gladly observe the Sunday or Lord's Day. Said a noted skeptic, Voltaire, "There is no hope of destroying the Christian religion so long as the Christian Sabbath is acknowledged and kept as a sacred day." Let us, then, Remember the Lord's Day, to keep it holy.

Fifth Commandment

"Honor thy father and thy mother."

My duty is . . . to love, honor, and succour my father and mother; to honor and obey the civil authority; to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and master; to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters.

There is a gradual transition between the first and second Tables, the Fifth Commandment being the connecting link. The first deals with our Duty towards God and the second with our Duty towards man. The fifth commandment partakes of the nature of both. Respect for parents is both a religious and social duty, hence we are not surprised that the Jews placed it in the first Table. This commandment is peculiar also because it is the only positive command and the only one with promise.

Among all ancient peoples respect for parents was considered a religious duty and was called "piety." An ancient writer, Plutarch, says, "Nature and the laws which guard natural order have put the first and chief honor upon parents, together with the gods," and Cicero says, "We ought to venerate a parent as we do a God." Similar expressions are found among the Egyptians, Persians, Chinese, and many others. Also among the Jews we find the same ideas, as a single quotation from the book of Leviticus will indicate, "Ye shall be holy, for I, Jehovah, am holy; fear every man his mother and his father and keep my Sabbaths." (Lev. 19, 2–3.) The penalty for breaking this commandment was death, because upon it depended the whole life of

the State. There were no magistrates or law courts in early times, nor even priests. Each father of a family was both priest and judge. He represented God to his children and also the authority of the State, so to rebel against him meant to rebel against all the authority there was. If we bear this in mind we get rid of the usual difficulty regarding the promise. It does not and never did mean that every individual who honors his parents will live to old age, though of course he is more likely to do so, since his parents can teach him a great many important things, but the commandment was originally given to the State and the promise is that the people who are law abiding and respectful of authority will endure, and this is eternally true. The nation whose homes are godly, orderly, and happy possesses the surest safeguard of prosperity and permanence. Men who revere their ancestors and prize their families will not be too proud or timid to fight for the graves of the one and the hearths of the other. On the contrary, when the family is dissolved, patriotism becomes a jest and public spirit expires; and the distracted people, having lost the sense of unity and the habit of subordination, become an inviting prey to foreign assault as well as domestic discord. Such a people will not dwell long in the land God gave them to inherit.

Some people today think that something should be said in our Catechism about the duty of parents to children. Perhaps so, but surely today no duty is more in need of stressing than that set forth in this commandment and in our old Catechism. With an exaggerated sense of independence on every hand, cropping forth

in all sorts of extreme and wild forms of socialism, communism, and anarchy, not only a disregard but an apparent disgust and impatience with the laws of our nation, our young need to learn the lesson of honor to parents and respect for the constituted authorities of both Church and State. Nothing else will enable the rising generation to conserve the experience and knowledge of their forefathers and maintain and forward the institutions they established.

Honor to parents is the beginning of all respect for authority without which no State can last. And what a natural and beautiful virtue it is! The parent does in truth represent God to the child. He, under God, is his creator, giving him his very life. The child is made in his image. His first ideas of God and of life come from the parent. This in itself throws a very great responsibility on the parents but perhaps an even greater one on the children. How sad and unbecoming it is to see children who have risen a stage above their parents become ashamed of their humble father or mother through whose sacrifices they have been enabled to accomplish what they have. They need to be reminded of the splendid example set by General Grant when he was President. At a magnificent ball in his honor, thronged with talented and brilliant people from this and other lands, he suddenly appeared with a humble, insignificant looking little woman in black on his arm, and turning to the assembled guests said in a tone of both filial pride and affection: "Ladies and gentlemen, my Mother."

Finally we should remember that this is a virtue we

can practice only for a time, because our parents are not with us always. When too late, many a child regrets his failure in this respect. Parents never cease to be interested in their children and long to hear of their success. Joseph's satisfaction in his achievements must have been greatly enhanced by the fact that his father was still living to see them. "Ye shall tell my father," he says, "of all my glory in Egypt and of all that ye have seen." Moreover, this message must have brought great pleasure to his father. Parents, too, are often hungry for a little word of appreciation as the following true story suggests. A mother of a large family, who for many long years had to do all the housework and the washing, but who, like many such mothers, by dint of great sacrifice managed to give all her children a good education so that all did well and some even achieved eminence in business or profession, lay dying. Her sons and daughters, who had long since left home and had families of their own, all came back to be at her bedside. As they stood there, finally one of the sons, overcoming his reserve and saying what doubtless he had often thought but never expressed, leaned over the bed and whispered, "Never mind, Mother, you have been a good mother to us all." In response the tired, wan, patient face turned towards him and said: "Thank you, John. You never told me so before."

Let us then all, both old and young children, endeavor to express by both word and deed that love and respect we all ought, and doubtless most do, feel towards our parents, thus giving joy to them and satisfaction to ourselves. And we may be very sure that in addition

we shall become recipients of a blessing from our Heavenly Father, who is the God and Father of us all.

Perhaps we cannot better conclude this lesson than by quoting Kipling's powerful verses on his Mother.

If I were hanged on the highest hill,
Mother o'mine, Mother o'mine!
I know whose love would follow me still,
Mother o'mine, Mother o'mine.

If I were drowned in the deepest sea,
Mother o'mine, Mother o'mine,
I know whose tears would come down to me,
Mother o'mine, Mother o'mine.

If I were damned of body and soul,
Mother o'mine, Mother o'mine,
I know whose prayers would make me whole,
Mother o'mine, Mother o'mine.

Sixth Commandment

"Thou shalt do no murder."

To hate nobody by word or deed, to bear no malice or hatred in my heart.

The Jews distinguished, as we do today, between two kinds of murder, viz, that due to violence and that due to neglect. Thus not only is direct murder forbidden but also indirect murder, and this latter covers a large field. The essential thing in murder is that it shortens human life and this may be done in a thousand ways. To work little children in coal mines or cotton mills so long and so hard that they grow up weak and stunted in body and mind; to work women in sweat

shops so that they contract some disease; to crowd men, women, and children into filthy and unsanitary tenements; to sell persons impure, adulterated, or unwholesome food—in short, deliberately to do anything that injures the health and so shortens the life of a human being, is to be guilty of this sin.

Self-murder or suicide is also forbidden by this commandment though apparently a great many so-called Christians do not know it. Among pagan nations, both ancient and modern, suicide is often looked upon as a noble act, but not so by Christianity. All life is a gift from God, our own as well as our neighbor's, and to take one's own life is to fling back God's gift in His face, so to speak, and has always been condemned by Christianity as a grievous sin. It is breaking the sixth commandment.

Whether war and capital punishment are forbidden by this commandment is perhaps a debatable question today. Originally they were not, for among the Jews various offenses were punishable by death and of course they had their army to fight their enemies with the Divine sanction and under the leadership of Moses and other great leaders. It may well be, however, and it is surely a consummation devoutly to be wished, that an enlightened Christian conscience may some day find a better way of dealing with criminals than by death sentence and a better and more rational manner of settling national disputes than by war. But in the discussion of these difficult questions we must beware of basing our arguments on a wrong foundation. The guiding principle behind this commandment is not, as

so many thoughtlessly suppose, the mere sacredness of human life, but reverence for man. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: *for in the image of God* made He him." Man, made in the image of God, is more than his mere physical life and there come times when the two are in conflict. Loyalty to Christ, truth, honor, the welfare of others or of some great cause may justify the taking or giving of life itself. *I* am more sacred than my life. The image of God in man must be allowed the opportunity to develop, and to protect at any cost what allows such development and makes life more worth while is a Christian duty.

In forbidding murder, and any willful injury of our fellows, direct or indirect—this commandment also forbids what leads up to such acts and hence it condemns anger, "hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness." "Whoso hateth his brother is a murderer," said our Lord, and anger or hatred is the real cause of murder. If there were no hate there would be no murders. Many persons allow themselves at times to hate others so intensely that they would not care what happened to them. That attitude of mind is the same as the actual murderer's, and God, who sees the heart, judges it accordingly. Of course we cannot love everybody, nor are we expected to, but we are to be careful to "bear no malice or hatred in our hearts." We are to endeavor to wish people no harm. We are to forgive even our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us. Nor is it enough to say, "I forgive him but he will get his deserts some day." Rather we must endeavor to emulate our

Lord and his martyr, St. Stephen, and say, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Indeed this must be our attitude if we are to say the Lord's Prayer sincerely. "Forgive us . . . as we forgive others" means literally that if we do not forgive others we are asking God not to forgive us, since we ask Him to give us the same kind and amount of forgiveness that we show to others.

Kindness in thought, word, and deed is what this commandment in essence teaches and requires. As the Catechism puts it, we are to "hurt nobody by word or deed." To abstain from hurting by deed alone is not safe or sufficient. How many hearts are made sorrowful and, indeed, lives shortened by unkind and thoughtless words! "Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead, but God, Himself, cannot stop them when they're said." To endeavor always to speak kindly and charitably about and to all is one of the ways of keeping this commandment, and of course the only way to be sure of being kind in deed and word is to be kind in thought. Here again, then, we must look within and strive to acquire a constant habit and attitude of loving-kindness to all our fellows, seeing in each one something of the Divine Image and striving so to live and act towards our fellows as to help that Image to come to its highest and best development.

Seventh Commandment

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity.

Blessed are the pure in heart.

THE primary and original purpose of this commandment was to safeguard the marriage bond. In this respect the Jews were far in advance of other ancient peoples. Heathen and pagan races live very much like animals but as man progresses he acquires more and more control of his body and its appetites and desires. So Marriage, among more advanced, and especially Christian, people becomes a holy and sacred relationship, not merely for the propagation of the race but also for the moral and spiritual development of all the members of the family. Therefore when two people are joined together in Holy Matrimony by the Christian Church, her priest solemnly pronounces over the married pair the words: "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder," which are the very words of our Lord, Himself. The ideal of Christian Marriage, therefore, is the union of one man to one woman forever, and so each party to the contract is required to say, "I take thee . . . until death do us part." This commandment, therefore, reminds us that these words mean exactly what they say and consequently people should not enter upon this holy estate "unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God."

The breaking of this solemn bond in any way violates this commandment. For man or wife to have the same relationship they have with one another with any other person is to commit adultery and the same sin is committed by those who hold such relationship with any person outside the marriage bond. Young men and

women are to keep themselves pure and clean in every way for one future life partner.

Divorce is also a breaking of this commandment. While the State may allow divorce for any and every cause, the Christian Church cannot. Our Lord's own words as given by St. Luke and St. Mark are as follows: "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband and be married to another, she committeth adultery." Of course there may be conditions which make it advisable or imperative for married persons to separate, and this the Church recognizes. There is, however, no necessity for them to marry again nor will they if they are endeavoring to live according to Christian standards. It should be clearly noted that it is not the separation (for proper cause) but the remarriage which constitutes the sin. Whatever may be the legal aspect of the matter, or even the present state of affairs among decent people, there can be no manner of doubt that Our Blessed Lord in His teaching held up the ideal of Christian marriage as that of one man so related to one woman for life.

Of course this commandment, like all the others, has a wider and deeper application. Underlying it is a great principle, viz, that the flesh must be subdued to the spirit, that in the words of the Catechism our bodies must be kept in "temperance, soberness, and chastity" in all departments of life, in our eating, drinking, working, playing, sleeping—and this will best be done by a constant realization of the fact that our bodies are the

temples of the Holy Spirit. They are, therefore, sacred and holy unto the Lord, to be kept in the best possible condition to minister to our soul's welfare and His glory.

Real control of the body, however, can be acquired only by going deeper and controlling the thoughts and affections. As Newman says:

> The thoughts control that o'er thee swell and throng,
> They will condense within the soul and turn to purpose strong,
> But he who lets his feeling run in soft luxurious flow
> Shrinks when hard service must be done and faints at every blow.

Indulging in impure thoughts, telling unclean stories or listening to them, reading suggestive books or looking at salacious pictures or plays, all these constitute a breaking of this commandment. No better definition of holiness perhaps was ever given than that of a little girl at an English boarding school who in response to the Bishop's question said, "Please, Sir; holiness is to be clean inside." The only way to keep clean outside is to be clean inside. A helpful story is told of an Arab boy, brought up to strict and unquestioning obedience, who was ordered by his father to take a basket and go to a certain stream and bring it back full of water. Dutifully the boy went, but after repeated trials came back to report failure. The father then pointed to the slime and mud at the bottom of his basket and ordered him to go to another stream which was pure. Again the boy tried and returned to say that he could bring no water in his basket. Once again the father pointed

to the bottom of the basket, now washed clean and white by the waters of the pure stream. The moral, I think, is plain.

The only way to be sure of keeping this commandment in the letter is to keep it in the spirit. That thoughts inevitably discharge into actions is the plain lesson and teaching of our Lord—"As a man thinketh in his heart, so he is." We would also do well here to recall the special reward promised to those who keep this commandment, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Possibly we cannot follow better advice than that of the Apostle: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think* on these things."

Eighth Commandment

"Thou shalt not steal."

To keep my hand from picking and stealing.

This commandment stands for honesty. It assumes the right to private property, a right which is constantly assumed in the Bible and one which is essential to any high degree of civilization or development. The underlying principle is that God's gifts belong to those who use and develop them. Labor, whether of hand

or head, enhances the value of things and that enhanced value rightly belongs to the one who created it. Property, too, has a moral value. The way in which a man acquires it and uses it is both a test and evidence of his character.

The primary meaning of this commandment is plain. We are forbidden to take what does not belong to us, and that not because "honesty is the best policy" but because *it is right*. In the long run, no doubt, honesty really pays, but the man who is honest for this reason only is not to be trusted at all. We must be honest whether it pays or not, as a matter of principle. We must endeavor to realize that we are entitled only to that for which we have given some equivalent and that in all circumstances and conditions we are to fight against the desire to get "something for nothing."

Direct and deliberate stealing, or taking what does not belong to us, is of course the first and chief thing forbidden and about this, in civilized countries, there can be no debate. Whether a pickpocket or a burglar, a sneak thief or a bank robber, a highwayman or a forger it is all the same. Moreover, the amount involved makes no difference so far as the sin is concerned. "It is a sin to steal a pin," begins a rhyme which I was taught as a boy, and we all need to realize that stealing is stealing, whether the amount be a pin or a million dollars. To take anything that does not belong to us is a sin.

There are also many indirect ways in which we may break this commandment. All sharp practices in business, false statements regarding values, untrue or exag-

gerated advertisements, adulterated foods, shoddy goods, short weights, and all such methods are really stealing. And what a lot of this there is today! If all the shoddy goods could go flying through the air and all the dishonestly put together stones and bricks in our buildings could groan, there would be such a noise as would deafen us and such a flying of things about us as would make it unsafe to walk abroad. Of course, graft in all its forms is stealing. Trade combinations, whether of capital or labor, which endeavor to obtain by force more than they are entitled to are also stealing. Gambling, whether in Wall Street or betting on the races or at cards, is also stealing. All of these, and countless other methods, are simply attempts to "get something for nothing" and so are violations of this commandment.

In still more subtle ways may we break this commandment. Persons who are otherwise honest seem to lose their sense of honor when dealing with the government or with a corporation. They will not hesitate to smuggle goods into the country and think it all right if they are not discovered. If the conductor forgets to take their fare, they will have no compunction at riding free and so steal from the railroad. An employer grinds down his help and so gets more labor than he pays for, or an employee wastes his time and so robs his employer of that which is his. Borrowers often do not return the things borrowed, whether it be a book or umbrella or money, not realizing that in so doing they are really stealing. All living beyond one's means, when there is no assurance of being able to pay one's

bills, is stealing. Perhaps the most prevalent form in America, one which seems harmless, but which is in danger of making us a byword among the nations, is that of "souvenir taking." One of our naval officers once stated that our warships were safe in every country of the world, even in so-called pagan lands, but that when they put into American harbors, everything movable had to be put away, fastened down, or watched. Even the buttons from officers' clothes were not safe. At certain hotels where college glee clubs or athletic teams put up, detectives were assigned to count the silver after the meals and a bill for what was missing was sent in. All of these things may seem amusing but when seriously considered they are nothing else than stealing and those who do them are really thieves. To take what belongs to someone else, whether the process be called "souvenir hunting" or by some other high-sounding phrase, is stealing.

Of course, in many of these instances the actual harm done to others is slight and so the law adjusts penalties accordingly. But, God is concerned not only with the law of the land but with the effect on the character of the individual. Lax views regarding little things may be just as harmful to character as in large things. A man in the penitentiary said that he began his career of crime by taking postage stamps when a boy to buy candy. While such an ending does not always follow, the danger is there and the injury to character.

As Christians we cannot be content with merely avoiding the breaking of the law. We must endeavor to fulfill its spirit. We must aim to be thoroughly and

completely honest before God and men. Someone has well said that a man's character is "what he is in the dark" and the Christian fulfillment of this commandment requires that we shall strive to be transparently and thoroughly honest, in thought, word, and deed. And so, the Catechism in enlarging on this commandment says that I must "keep my hands from picking and stealing" and also that "I must learn and labor to get mine own living."

Ninth Commandment

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

To keep my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering.

Veracity is a tardy virtue in human history. Among primitive peoples lying was scarcely considered a sin and it does not lie very heavily on the conscience of Oriental peoples today. Many noted Bible characters, Moses, Isaac, David, and Jacob, did not scruple to lie when it suited their purposes. Moses, however, learned that it was wrong. His first legislation was directed chiefly against that extreme form of lying which we call perjury. It also condemned all serious "false witness" against one's neighbor, which if established by competent witnesses was punishable by stoning to death. While this severe penalty is no longer inflicted we have a legal remnant of the Mosaic legislation in our modern laws against perjury, which is one of the crying evils of the present day, especially, one fears, in America. Perjury remains still more serious than other lies partly

because it is a deliberate crime against Society and, as such, strikes at the very vitals of the State.

But this commandment also in principle forbids all lying. As regards our neighbor, "false witness" may take the form of slander, gossip, and detraction.

Slander is the saying of evil things we know to be untrue. This, of course, will be recognized as a serious sin and yet there is probably more of it than one suspects. It is not necessary that the lie shall be "made out of whole cloth." It may consist merely in an exaggeration, a changed emphasis, heightened coloring for the sake of dramatic effect regardless of consequences. By any of these means one may convey a false impression and that, however effected, is the essence of lying. Newspapers and political parties, capitalists and laborers, trades people and professional men, even the various religious sects and different denominations of Christians, are frequently guilty of this sin. Before accepting or repeating anything evil of another person or group we would do well to be absolutely sure that it is true.

Gossip is the saying of evil things we may not know to be untrue but about whose accuracy we do not take very great pains to be sure. Oh! what terrible and lasting harm is often done by so-called harmless gossip! Like the avalanche it grows with each repetition. As the little girl once said, "Nobody does nothing and everybody goes on telling it everywhere." The harm done is often quite as great as in deliberate slander, with its awful trail of ruined careers, blasted reputations, and broken hearts. Our only safeguard here is to resolve

never to repeat or even to listen to idle or malicious gossip.

Detraction is the saying of evil things which we may know to be really true, and even this may sometimes be a sin. To reveal some sin or wrongdoing of someone's past life when the individual concerned may, for aught we know, have done his best to atone therefore, is a sin. Because a thing is true is not a sufficient reason for its repetition. A very good rule in all these cases is never to repeat anything evil of anyone without first asking oneself questions: 1. Is it true? 2. It is necessary to repeat it? 3. Will its repetition do any good? And finally if I answer all these questions in the affirmative, let me be conscious of God's presence as I repeat it.

Of course here, as in all the other commandments, we must go beyond the letter to the spirit. In fact we cannot even keep it in the letter unless we endeavor to keep it in the spirit. The underlying cause of all evil speaking lies in the heart, not the lips. Our pride combined with a knowledge of our shortcomings makes us tend, often unconsciously, to bring down others to our own level. We instinctively resent their superiority. This at bottom means a lack of love and sympathy for our fellows. As Robert Burns well says:

> Who made the heart, tis He alone
> Decidedly can try us,
> He knows each chord in separate tone,
> Each string its various bias.
> Then at the balance, let's be mute.

We never can adjust it.
What's done, we partly may compute
But know not what's resisted.

Of "every idle word" our Lord says we must give account. Not every malicious or untrue or unkind one, but every idle, i. e., "thoughtless" one. This seems almost too strong a statement until we realize that our Lord's thought is not primarily on the word but on what lies behind it. The "idle" word means the "unpremeditated" or "spontaneous" word, which therefore represents our natural and true disposition. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and it is in this sense that we are to understand His stern utterance: "By your words shall ye be justified and by your words shall ye be condemned.

An ancient fable tells of a man who after death was stationed at a point in space so far distant that the first words he ever uttered had not yet reached there, and was condemned to remain and listen to every word he had ever spoken throughout his whole life. Would any of us like to do that? While only a fable, it suggests a deep spiritual truth, viz, that in that clearer vision of the life hereafter we shall have a fuller realization of the significance of the things done and said here and a truer sense of their values for good or evil and in that white light of Eternity perhaps our deepest remorse and regret will be for the sins of our tongues. Well says St. James, "If any man among you seemeth to be religious and bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."

Tenth Commandment

"Thou shalt not covet."

Not to covet nor desire other men's goods.

We come now to the conclusion of this ancient Code of Laws which, while addressed primarily to a Nation, applies also to individuals. Though brief, the code is essentially complete. To be sure it required amplification, such as it receives in Exodus and Leviticus, but in germ all crimes are included in these short "Words." All duties, those to God, to superiors, and to equals, find expression.

The Tenth and final Commandment of this code is unique. It differs from all the preceding. The first nine are formal, legal, dealing only with overt acts; the tenth goes deeper and touches motives. The nine are concerned with specific offenses; the tenth with thoughts. The former view God as Ruler and King; the last as the Searcher of Hearts. It throws, as it were, a searchlight on all the preceding words, intensifying their meaning and revealing their inner, spiritual content.

Let us consider its literal meaning. The Standard Dictionary defines "covet": "To have an inordinate or unlawful desire for," but the word is also used in a good sense as "to desire eagerly," "crave, long for," as where St. Paul tells his readers to "covet the best gifts." That the first sense is meant by the commandment is evident by the amplifications in varying forms in Exodus and Deuteronomy. This is a very impor-

tant distinction. Desire is a God-implanted instinct and lies at the basis of all progress, individual and national. It is right to desire health, strength, knowledge, friends, love, and even the good things of this world. Such desire is wrong only when the motive is wrong, i. e., when one becomes selfish and desires good things for oneself regardless of the effect on others. Often a vice is but an overdeveloped virtue, so rightful desire very easily degenerates into wrongful desire. So the commandment puts its very simply and bluntly: "Thou shalt not desire anything that is thy neighbor's." Of some things, all spiritual gifts for example, there are more than enough for all and we cannot desire them too earnestly. Of other things, the supply is limited and I must beware of desiring things at the expense of my neighbor. It may be right for me to desire an automobile provided I can get it honestly. It is wrong for me to desire my neighbor's car and be prevented from getting it only by fear of the police or concern for my reputation. Desire in itself is neutral, non-moral. It becomes good or bad according to its results and the motives behind it.

Perhaps no one of the commandments is broken so frequently as this. The poor envy the money of the rich and the rich the health and freedom from responsibility of the poor. The weak envy the strong, the sick the well, the ignorant the learned. Men envy one another's business success, women one another's social prominence. Nations covet territory, trade, and power, the cause of most wars. The "have nots" continually envy the "haves." Thus the whole world is in a fer-

ment of discontent, with consequent unhappiness. Good would it be for us all to emulate St. Paul's dictum, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

The keeping of this commandment insures the keeping of all the rest. The man who does not covet another's wife, house, cattle, or anything that is his is in no danger of committing adultery, murder, or theft. Moreover, he is adopting the only sure course of avoiding so doing. Thoughts harbored are sure to pass over into acts.

> Our thoughts still travel with us from afar
> And what we think of makes us what we are.

This commandment thus indicates the true nature of sin. We must distinguish between sins and sin. Sins are specific acts, sin is an attitude of the soul itself. We too often think of sin as separate from ourselves, as something objective, outside of us as, for instance, where we recall the sins of our past, or the sins of the world. This is a formal, legalistic, superficial viewpoint. Sin is really my will, myself taking a certain attitude, an attitude of rebellion against God. This makes it both very serious and hopeful. Because it is myself, I am responsible, but just because it is myself, I have it, by God's grace, in my power. Sin is myself turning away from God and conversion is simply myself turning towards God. Thus in this commandment, we have a deeper and truer conception of sin than in any of the others. In fact, it breathes the spirit of the New Testament and approximates the teaching of the Gospel. Hence this last commandment forms a connecting link

between the Old Testament and the New. It expresses in negative form the essence of our Lord's second great commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Then the teaching of Christ is the logical development and fulfillment of this ancient Jewish law. "Love God," "Love your neighbor" summarizes all our Lord's teaching. It was all He asked of us and it is enough. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The root of all sin is "self" and the cure is to follow the teaching and example of the God-Man "who pleased not Himself."

It is related of St. John at Ephesus that, when he became so old that he had to be carried into the Church by his younger brethren, he always said the same words, doubtless the shortest and best sermon ever preached: "Little children, love one another." When his friends remonstrated with him and asked why he always said the same thing he replied, "Because it is the Lord's saying and if only that be done, it is enough."

PRAYER

WE BEGAN this series by saying that the Catechism falls naturally into five parts, viz, The Christian Covenant, Faith, Duty, Prayer, and Sacraments. It was also shown that these are logically linked together in an orderly and progressive whole, the Covenant being the basis of all. It in turn demands and depends upon Faith; Faith must bear fruit in the form of Duty; and Duty cannot be adequately discharged by human strength alone, hence the need of Prayer and Sacrament.

We have briefly considered the Christian Covenant and the Christian Faith. Duty as set forth in the Commandments has been so splendidly and thoroughly treated by Dr. Dearmer that we shall not attempt to traverse that field again, but instead, proceed directly to the subject of Prayer.

The relation of Prayer to Duty is set forth by the Catechism in the transition paragraph from the one to the other, which reads as follows: "My good child, know this: that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the Commandments of God and to serve Him, without His special grace; which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer.

Let me hear, therefore, if thou can'st say the Lord's Prayer."

Before taking up the Lord's Prayer suppose we devote the remainder of this chapter to a consideration of Prayer itself. What is Prayer? In our search for a definition we must be careful to avoid both extremes. On the one hand are those who confuse Prayer with its external forms. While forms and times and methods are of great importance and much help, it must always be remembered that there is a great difference between "saying prayers" and "praying." One might—and it is feared many do—say the most correct prayers in the most regular and conscientious manner all through life, and yet never really pray. For these, after all, are but the externals, the book work of prayer, and while intended to be helpful, they frequently constitute a grave danger by becoming a substitute for the reality. "Saying prayers" is not necessarily "praying."

On the other hand some persons, in their reaction to this admitted danger, have gone so far as to decry and deride all forms and times of Prayer and even to deprecate the use of words at all. Prayer for them is nothing more than a vague sort of recognition of the general goodness in man and nature—a sort of condescending, benevolent feeling towards the Spirit behind things. The follow passage from a well-known book illustrates this point of view:

"Trilby sang a song of Beranger's and L'Endormi said, 'To sing like that is to pray, and thinking is praying very often, and so is being ashamed when one has done a mean thing, and grateful when it is a fine day.

What is it but praying when you try to keep up after losing all you care for, and a very good praying too? Prayers without words are the best.' "

"Yes," one might add, "so are poems without words, music without notes, and landscape without color, or modeling without clay, and life without consciousness."

For a true view of prayer we should endeavor to avoid both these extremes. Prayer is neither words nor form, nor is it a mere vague emotion or instinct. It may be based upon the latter but does not rise to the dignity of Prayer until it becomes somewhat more definite and conscious. Definitions are plentiful. "Prayer is the will of man moving the will of God." "Prayer is making real to ourselves the Reality in which we live." "Prayer is talking with God." And many others might be given. For our purpose I am going to select the one, "Talking with God," though even that I should like to modify to read, "Conversing with God."

This definition really includes all of the others. It implies a conscious recognition of God's presence, for we cannot converse with a person whom we do not believe in or recognize. It may or may not involve words. An ignorant person in France was seen to spend many hours in the church in evident silence and with much satisfaction. On being asked why he never spoke or used the customary form of prayer and how he got benefit from his silent worship, he replied simply, "I see Him and He sees me." Truly there is the spirit of real prayer. The Quakers, too, are accustomed to pray by the hour, either singly or in groups, in utter

silence, and no one can doubt that they experience a Presence with whom they can commune. On the other hand, much, and perhaps the most usual Prayer, will be vocal. Words help us to frame and concentrate our thoughts, and one saintly English bishop tells us that it was his custom to say even his private prayers aloud. Hence there can be no set method for all. The essential thing is to be conscious of God's Presence and to converse or commune with Him.

Moreover, it should remembered that this implies more than just talking to God or merely asking Him for things. True converse is mutual. One party must not do the talking. He must take his turn at listening. True Prayer is communing with God. It is a recognition of man's unity with the Eternal, Originating, Indwelling Spirit. It is a contact of two personalities so vital and real that one influences and affects the other. It is a union of man with God, so close that God, Himself, with all His Divine power indwells man and so aids him in his efforts and in turn uses him for His great purposes. Said an ancient mystic: "I would fain be to the living God what a man's hand is to a man." Such is the ultimate purpose of Prayer.

Without Prayer, it is impossible for man to achieve his true destiny. He can neither develop his own character nor render his best services to the world in his own strength. Indeed, it is doubtful if he does anything in his own strength. His efforts after righteousness are never unaided. Although he may neither seek nor be conscious of Divine aid, still it remains true that

Every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness
Are His alone.

If this be true of the natural man, how much more of God's grace and strength will come to him who definitely and earnestly seeks it! If, therefore, we are to "run the way of His Commandments" we must seek His help in Prayer.

I. THE LORD'S PRAYER

After this manner pray ye.

Once some pupils came to their Teacher to ask Him to give them a lesson. "Please, Master," they said, "teach us to pray." And in reply He did not say, "Just pray as your feelings prompt you," or, "Just pray from the heart," but instead He taught them a specific prayer, which all Christendom have used ever since and which, in honor of Him who gave it, is known as the Lord's Prayer. Most of us learned this Prayer at our mother's knee, and it is rather an interesting reflection to recall that our mother learned it in the same way, and her mother in turn, until in imagination we can trace it right back to the Apostles, who learned it from the lips of our Lord, Himself! No wonder it has hallowed associations!

Its origin is worth notice. Twice it appears in the New Testament with slight unimportant variations, in St. Matthew and St. Luke, and in all probability it was given or used on many other occasions. All its peti-

tions save one are found, in substance, in the Jewish Scriptures, hence it is not original in the sense that each thought is new. But the way these ancient petitions are brought together, and the whole spirit and outlook of the resultant whole, constitute something unique and original. They combine into a complete and perfect prayer—brief, simple, catholic, and spiritual.

Its structure shows it to be a close-knit, vital, and organic unity. It consists of an Address or Introduction, a series of Petitions or Intercessions, and a Conclusion, which is a Thanksgiving or Doxology. Its petitions are usually considered as seven in number, but I prefer to take what are ordinarily counted the last two, viz, "Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil," as one, thus making six. These six fall into equal divisions, corresponding to the two divisions of the Decalogue and to the Summary of the Law. The first half has to do with God's Glory, His Name, His Kingdom, His Will; the second with man's welfare —his spiritual and physical needs. And yet the two are inextricably mingled, since what enhances God's glory makes for man's welfare, and what increases man's welfare redounds to God's glory. An interesting, and perhaps not too fanciful, parallelism may be observed in the corresponding petitions of each triplet. It is our Father we ask for sustenance or daily bread; our King, for pardon; and our Master, for deliverance and guidance. There may be noted also an interesting and logical progress in each series of petitions. The hallowing of God's Name results in the coming of the Kingdom, and the Kingdom of God is nothing other than

that state of affairs wherein His will is done. Then for ourselves, our first, though lowest, need is bodily sustenance; then release from the chain of our sins; and lastly, divine succor and guidance. Thus the whole Prayer appears as an ordered and organic whole. The order of a single phrase could not be changed without loss. The whole Prayer, like a rare gem with its many shining facets, comes to us in a perfect and complete entity.

Its *function* is two-fold, since it is both a form and pattern prayer. As a *form* it was doubtless much used by our Blessed Lord, Who, in common with all devout Hebrews, must have constantly used forms of prayers in the synagogue worship; thus, whatever may be the weakness and dangers of such forms, they cannot be wrong or harmful in themselves. Indeed forms of some kind are essential, and the esteem in which this particular form is held is evidenced by the Church's provision that it shall be used at least once in every public service, as well as by its well-nigh universal use in the private devotions of Christians.

As a *pattern* it affords a standard after which we are to model all our prayers. Complete and comprehensive as is the Lord's Prayer, it was never intended that we should be limited to it alone. "After this manner," or "Thus pray ye," said our Lord. You need not always use these words, but you must always pray in this fashion and in this spirit. All that is essential to prayer —Adoration, Confession, Petition, Intercession, and Thanksgiving—is contained therein and in the proper order.

Its spirit and outlook is evidenced chiefly in the order

of its several parts. The natural man begins—and we fear frequently ends—with purely selfish petitions. For too many people the whole prayer is simply asking God's help, and if such help is not given in the precise manner requested, prayer is declared to be a failure. One is reminded of the sailor in a storm at sea who prayed, "O Lord, I have never asked for anything before, and if you will only get me out of this, I will never bother you again as long as I live." We may smile at this extreme and naïve instance, but one suspects that in essence it represents a great many prayers of so-called Christians who think of God as a Being to be used for their own purposes, and prayer as a sort of pulling wires in the spiritual world for their benefit.

Such selfishness has no place in Christian prayer and finds no sanction whatever in the Lord's Prayer. There God and His concerns come first, and man's desires second. The first half of the Prayer is taken up with God's great purposes, and not until we come to the fourth petition is anything asked for man and then only for his simplest material needs and his spiritual well-being. Moreover, even these, if the true spirit of the prayer be caught, are asked humbly and conditionally. God's Glory, God's Kingdom, God's Will come first, and man's needs second—a long way second.

Here is where we have all gone lamentably astray. Too many of our prayers are but variations of the single, selfish theme, "Give us what we want," instead of the great central Christian petition, "Thy will be done." Too often are we chiefly concerned with securing a powerful Ally instead of becoming better servants of a

perfect King. Truly we need a better sense of proportion in our prayers—fewer petitions for self and its needs, and more for God and His Cause. We need to think less of the Power which might do so much for us and more of the Goodness that has an overwhelming claim on our obedience.

We see all this clearly in our human relationships. A child at first thinks of his father merely as a provider, one who supplies his wants and grants his desires. As he grows older, however, he becomes less selfish and endeavors more and more to ask only for those things that please his father, or, at least, do not displease him. At this stage he is rather ashamed to be seeking things for himself and begins to take an interest in his father's plans and purposes. Then there comes a time when, such is the harmony of spirit between them, petition becomes unnecessary and in a measure seems unworthy, and he seeks first and foremost his father's presence and companionship. And at last, after long communion, the state is reached when the son has caught a vision of the greatness and importance of his father's plans and, as a loyal son, enters so heartily into them that all thought of self is lost and he desires more than anything else in the world the furtherance of those plans. Some such progress should be evident in the life of Christians. We should not rest forever in the child stage. With the years our sympathetic understanding of God and His purposes should increase and our prayers consequently become less and less concerned with self and more and more with God and His Kingdom.

II. THE LORD'S PRAYER

In the last chapter we considered the Lord's Prayer as a whole. Here we shall simply make a running commentary on its several clauses.

Our Father—the very first words of the Lord's Prayer—are of the utmost significance. We pray not to a King, Lawgiver, or Judge, much less to an Oriental Despot, but to a Father—one who is tenderer than the sweetest mother, more just than the purest saint, to whose loving care the one lost sheep is a matter of grave concern, and without whose knowledge not a sparrow falleth. Then, too, we pray not to *a* Father or even *my* Father. Thus is selfishness eliminated at the very first word and we are reminded that we are all members of one family and that what we ask for ourselves, we ask for all. It has been well said that "meum" and "tuum" are not Christian words. In prayer, as in many other things, half the battle is to start right and we will start right if we realize the full significance of that little opening word "our."

Who art in heaven. We must be careful here to avoid thinking of God as far off in some distant place called Heaven. Instead, "He is not far from any one of us." "Closer is He than breathing and nearer than hands and feet." God is spirit. We do not have to search for Him afar but only to turn our thoughts within. As St. Augustine finely says: "Thither (that is, towards God) one journeyeth not in ships, nor in chariots, nor on foot; for to journey thither, nay even

to arrive there, is nothing else but to will to go." So, however we interpret the phrase, we must not lose sight of God's constant presence. The Aramaic words our Lord used have no exact equivalent in Greek or English, so when translated they appeared sometimes as "Father who art in Heaven," and sometimes as "Heavenly Father." It would seem better, therefore, to consider this clause as equivalent to "Heavenly Father," a phrase which reminds us of His nature and character and at the same time avoids the dangers of spatial ideas. God may be in heaven, but it is equally true and more helpful to remember that heaven is where God is, for what we want is not merely to get to heaven when we die but to experience something of heaven here and now.

Hallowed be Thy Name. This of course forbids swearing or any light or trivial use of God's Name. (Perhaps it would be well if we had something of the Jews' reverence for the Sacred Name which prevented them from ever uttering or writing it, so that today no one knows how it was pronounced.) It also requires reverence for holy things, the Bible, the Church, the Altar. All this is obvious, but much more is involved. God's Name stands for His nature, character, reputation, and we must "hallow His Name" not only by word but by deed. This we do when we endeavor to live a consistent life, when we regularly attend public worship, and when we do our utmost to promote and further His plans in the world. Thus we enchance His reputation before men and so elicit respect and honor for His Name.

Thy Kingdom come. I like to think this was our

Lord's favorite petition. It was for this purpose that He came into the world. The Kingdom was the burden of all His teaching and preaching, the subject of most of His parables and discourses. In His person it was already present in germ and destined to spread until it compassed the whole earth. It was not merely something for the dim and shadowy future, not something purely spiritual, not simply a hope of single blessedness hereafter, but also a present reality, a state of affairs here upon earth which shall be progressively realized and finally attained when all men in all their associations and mutual relations shall live in accordance with God's laws. The bringing in of this Kingdom was His chief objective and the spreading of Christianity in a largely unchristian world remains the Christian's main business, individual salvation must come in by the way. We must learn to care infinitely more for Jesus Christ than for our own individual concerns. For this we must work in the spirit of those glorious lines of William Blake:

> I will not cease from mental strife,
> Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
> Till we have built Jerusalem
> In England's green and pleasant land.

This is also the thing for which we are to pray first and foremost. All Christian prayer must center about and be conditioned by this great missionary petition. With all our hearts and souls we must learn to pray—*Thy Kingdom come.*

Thy will be done follows logically upon the preced-

ing since it is both the condition and evidence of the coming of the Kingdom. The Kingdom is the end, obedience to God the means, hence together they represent the burden and purpose of our Lord's life and work.

Now this petition has been misused and abused! And what terribly false ideals of God have resulted! Taken right out of its context, violently separated from its following conjoined clause, it is placed over the grave of some innocent child, untimely cut off, or used in such a way as to imply that our Father God is directly and solely responsible for all the horrible catastrophes that befall the human race. To honor, as we must, the devout souls who bow to what they conceive to be the Divine Will, does not prevent us from condemning the distorted and false theology of their attitude. We may not enlarge upon this but simply throw out the earnest warning that the phrase must be taken in its entirety if we are to do justice to our Lord's teaching. He is here telling His faithful to combat all evil, within themselves and in the world about, so that God's will may increasingly prevail until at last it is done here "*on earth as it is in heaven,*" i. e., perfectly and completely.

This, moreover, is not a mere individual petition but has to be interpreted, like all else in this prayer, in a *social sense,* and here, particularly, in its relation to its preceding clause, "Thy Kingdom come!" It looks far afield and touches all departments of life. In the city, in the country, in the shop, in the office, in work and in play, in ourselves, in others, may His will prevail.

This petition represents the very heart and essence of all true prayer. For in the ultimate, Christian prayer is not bending God's will to ours, but bending our will to God's. It starts with the assumption that His will is best, His purpose supreme, and goes on the supposition that God and man are allies working together for a great Cause, in the pursuit of which all that concerns man sinks into insignificance. "Thy will be done," here and everywhere, first, last, and at all times, is its constant and passionate petition. Thy will be done in me; Thy will be done by me, with all the strength and influence that I have, so that my feeble efforts, my utter sacrifice if need be, added to and coöperating with all the forces that make for righteousness, may be enabled to advance the Kingdom of God by so much as a hair's breadth! No act of meek submission to the inevitable is this; but an enthusiastic, joyous, powerful, positive aspiration which makes man a fit and pliable and willing instrument of the Almighty in the furtherance of His great ends. As Father Carey well says, this petition, and indeed all true Christian prayer, may be reduced to a single phrase of just four words: "Use me again to-day."

> O, Use me Lord, use even me,
> Just as Thou wilt and when and where,
> Until Thy blessed face I see,
> Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share.

III. THE LORD'S PRAYER

Give us this day our daily bread, the fourth petition, is the first one for ourselves. What a lesson in propor-

tion this is! Having first come into the presence of our Heavenly Father, we are naturally, as loyal and devoted children, chiefly interested in His concerns. Consequently our first requests are for His honor, His Kingdom, and the doing of His will—three earnest petitions—and not until then do we ask anything for ourselves. Then, too, we ask not for the multitude of things we think we need, not for the luxuries of life—fine clothes, automobiles, etc.—but for its bare necessities, for daily bread. Oh, if all our prayers observed this sense of proportion and this spirit, we should not only be better Christians but there would be no complaints of unanswered prayer. Suffering we may have and hardship and privation—since "the servant is not above his Lord,"—but enough to keep body and soul together so long as God has work for us to do in this world, that we shall never lack.

This clause also reminds us that God knows that we have a body and that the body is not to be despised or ill-treated. Some persons would be more spiritual than our Lord himself and treat man as if he were pure spirit and the body of no account. This leads either to the abuse of the body in sinful self-indulgence or its neglect in false ascetic practices. We may be thankful for the hard common sense of the Christian faith. It faces the facts of life and treats man as he is, a being with both soul and body. While the soul's demands are paramount, the body nevertheless must have attention. "A healthy mind in a healthy body" is the ideal condition. Each acts upon and influences the other. "Nor soul helps flesh more than flesh helps

soul!" Our bodies, moreover, are the "temples of the Holy Spirit" and as such must be kept both strong and clean, and always under the spirit's control. Surely this is sane and healthful doctrine.

The phrase translated "daily," has given rise to much discussion. Probably no scholar knows exactly what it means. But, after all, the several interpretations make little practical difference. The import of all is that we are to look to God for sustenance from day to day, to trust Him who feedeth the sparrows to feed us, to rely on Him who created the soul to sustain the body also. Here, therefore, we have a sure warrant for prayer for material things. Indeed, no domain or experience of life is outside the province of prayer. We must also remember that this petition, like all the rest, is in the plural. Too many persons apply it to themselves alone, or perhaps to their families. But it is intended to include all mankind. As we utter it, we must remember the hungry people in the slums, the starving in famine-stricken countries, all the needy ones everywhere, and, if the prayer be real, we shall be forced to do our utmost to answer it by relieving such distress as we can.

Forgive us our trespasses, is naturally our next petition. Bodily existence comes first, of course, but man "cannot live by bread alone," and unless he be a mere animal, he must soon become conscious of his spirit and its needs. Such consciousness comes first through conscience. We have all erred and strayed like lost sheep. We have sinned and so cut the connection between ourselves and God. We cannot absolve ourselves and mere

forgetting does not suffice. We want restored the broken unity, the lost companionship, and so we ask God's forgiveness.

But here too there is a succeeding clause which attaches a vitally important condition. Forgive us *as* we forgive others. One wonders if the full import of this is realized? It is really a prayer to God *not* to forgive us unless in turn we forgive. Many who say it may not mean it that way but that is the exact significance of the little word "as." And so, whether we like it or not, the only way we are authorized to ask God for forgiveness is to ask Him to forgive us *proportionately,* that is, just in the same measure and degree as we forgive. If firmly grasped, what a revolution this will work in our lives! If we forgive partially or grudgingly, we ask to be so forgiven. Therefore, if for ourselves we really desire free and full forgiveness we must grant the same to others. How loving and forgiving we should all become!

Again we must realize the force of the plural pronoun. It is not forgive *my* trespasses, but forgive *us;* and that makes it a great intercessory, priestly prayer. We must pause, ere we say it, to think in love and pity, of all sinners—the hardened criminals, the drunkards and thieves and liars, the fathers who neglect their children and children who bring shame on their parents, men who ruin women and women who drag down men, and also the great mass of idle, frivolous, heartless, though often so-called Christian, people who are doing nothing to make this world a better place. For all these we are to pray that they may find mercy and forgiveness—

"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, belong together. They follow naturally after forgiveness, for the moment one has been forgiven and reinstated and has resolved to lead a new life, temptations and trials are sure to come. Forgiveness for the past is not enough. It must be followed by guidance and power in the present and future; and just in proportion as our repentance is real will our desire for guidance and strength be earnest and intense. Conscious of our own weakness and blindness, we depend humbly and gladly upon our Divine Guide.

Difficulties are sometimes felt in connection with this clause. Does God ever lead us into temptation? Surely not in the sense of tempting us to sin. St. James, says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." But in another sense God does allow us to undergo temptation as a trial to test and strengthen us. Just as muscle cannot be developed without resistance, neither can our spirit. Virtue is the result of the conquest of evil. This must be what St. James had in mind when he said, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations," and likewise Browning when he says:

> Temptation sharp? Thank God, a second time!
> Why comes temptation, but for man to meet
> And conquer, and make crouch beneath his feet,
> And so be pedestaled in triumph?

Hence in this petition we do not make the foolish request that God will relieve us of all trial and temptation. Some may be necessary for our good and some we may be asked to bear because it furthers His Kingdom. Our request here, as always, is conditioned by the previous one. "If it be consonant with Thy plans and purposes," we pray, "lead us not into temptation," but, we proceed quickly, "If it should be necessary for us to undergo trial and temptation—then give us such guidance and strength as will bring us safely through. Whatever happens, deliver us from evil," i. e., sin. And once again we ask this not for ourselves alone but for the whole human race. Lead us all, O Father, through the trials and temptations of this mortal life without sin, until at last all mankind, redeemed and purified, shall come home to Thee.

The Lord's Prayer ends with an ascription of praise—a doxology. This does not belong to the prayer as originally given by our Lord, but was added later by the Church. Nevertheless, it is a most fitting ending, striking a note of confidence and praise similar to the *Gloria Patri* with which in public worship every psalm and canticle closes. A similar spirit is apparent in the *Magnificat, Te Deum, Benedicite*, and many of our hymns.

Thine is the kingdom, strikes a note of confidence and sets forth the ground of our praise. Oftentimes the facts of life give the opposite impression. The forces of evil are so strong in ourselves and in the world that we wonder whether after all this is not the devil's

world and, therefore, the wisest course for true Christians is not to keep aloof from it and to look forward to the time when we shall leave this desert drear for Heaven our home. The full coming of the Kingdom is so long delayed; more than 1900 years since Christ came to earth and so little has been accomplished. The world is largely pagan still. So we reason and almost despair. Is God asleep or on a journey? Is Christianity, many are saying today, doomed?

Surely in the face of present facts we need to sustain us the deeply-grounded conviction that, "Thine is the Kingdom." And we have many helps in this direction; geology and astronomy should teach us patience. It has taken God millions of years to make a man and shall we expect spiritual perfection in a few hundred? Nineteen hundred years is but a tiny fragment of time to One who has the ages at His disposal. Despite all appearance then, we can and should be constantly asserting that the Kingdom is God's. "The Lord is King, be the people never so impatient." "God sitteth above the waterflood." "The Lord remaineth a King forever."

Christians; and Christians only, are the true optimists, not with the cheap optimism that shuts its eyes to the hard facts of life and tries to believe that "Whatever is is right," but with the true optimism based upon the unshakable conviction that no matter how things seem or how slow or uncertain goes the battle, the ultimate issue is never in doubt and that through the immeasurable centuries God is working out His vast plans and in the end He will prevail. So we pray all the previous

petitions of this great prayer with absolute confidence: "For Thine is the Kingdom."

And the power—yes, all the power there is is God's. He it is who both creates and sustains this vast universe, energizing and working through its every part. Should he withdraw His sustaining power for a moment the material world would cease to be. All the discoveries of science are but the formulation of the method (or law) of working of some hidden inner force which we Christians know as God. God is almighty of course, yet perhaps the most significant display of His almighty power is in self-restraint. Why does He permit so many awful things to happen without interfering? Simply because He knows that in the end His plan will succeed. The very fact that He is satisfied not to use His power to interfere and set things right (as we conceive it) is the best possible evidence of His confidence in the spiritual forces already at work. Men may obstruct, postpone, mar, and thwart His plans, but He never loses patience or attempts to force the issue, so confident is He of the ultimate result. Since, therefore, everything is in His control we can be patient too.

And the glory—brings us to the climax of the doxology. The previous two phrases constitute the groundwork or basis and this the jubilant result. Since Thine is the power and the kingdom, Thine be the glory too! Right reflection on His handiwork in nature, His loving tenderness towards man, lifts the heart inevitably to praise. While nature's praise is dumb and inarticulate, man may give voice to his. He may show

it forth by both word and deed. How sadly neglected is the duty of praise! How much better and stronger would we be if we practised it more! The contrast between ourselves and the early Christians in this respect is shown by the following excerpt from the *Apology* of Aristides, written early in the second century: "Every morning and at all hours, on account of the goodness of God toward them, they praise and laud Him, and over their food and over their drink they render Him thanks. And if any righteous person of their number passes away from the world, they rejoice and give thanks to God, and they follow His body, as if he were moving from one place to another. And when a child is born to any one of them, they praise God; and if, again, it chance to die in its infancy, they praise God mightily as for one who has passed through the world without sins. Such is the ordinance of the laws of the Christians, O king, and such their conduct."

Amen, the word with which we close, is usually interpreted to mean, "So be it," but that has become a rather cold and formal phrase. We may well take a lesson from the Chinese. When the Lord's Prayer was interpreted into their language there was found no equivalent word for "Amen," so they had to resort to the following phrase: "It is my heart's desire." We cannot better close our consideration of this wonderful prayer, or our own daily use of it, than by saying "Amen" in that spirit, filling it thus full of joy and gratitude and confidence and loyalty and making the whole a deep and joyous reality. "It is my heart's desire."

THE CHURCH AN ORGANISM

"The Church is the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head, and all baptized people the members."

TO UNDERSTAND what is meant by the statement that the Church is the Body of Christ, we must do a little clear thinking and define our terms. What do we mean by Body? If we mean a body like our own—with two arms, two legs, two eyes, et cetera—of course it is absurd to say the Church is Christ's Body. We must therefore consider carefully the essential meaning of the word "body." A moment's reflection will make it clear that our human bodies are not the only bodies. We do not need St. Paul to remind us that "all flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestial," for we have seen the bodies of queer animals and insects which differ greatly from ours. If, as some people think, the planet Mars is inhabited the dwellers thereon may well have a different kind of body than any we know. So we must determine what a body is in essence, and my own brief definition is: "A body is an instrument of spirit." Such instrument must be adapted to its environment and in a material world such

as ours must be material. Its precise form may vary but that does not matter so long as spirit can use it.

Spirit must have a body to accomplish anything in a material world. Some of us as children used to be afraid of ghosts. We no longer are because we know that ghosts—if they exist—cannot harm us. They are mere spirit, like the air about us, and without some physical instrument they are utterly powerless. Even the spiritualists who claim to bring back departed spirits to this earth are dependent on matter. The spirits (appear to) move a chair, rap on a table, or write on a slate. Speaking itself or the utterance of any sound is physical, depending on a physical mouth to utter and ear to receive. In short, there is no way in which spirit can do anything in this world without a body or instrument. This is true not only of human spirits but of the divine spirit which is God.

God needs a body in order to function in this world. In olden times He depended on the bodies of men. His spirit came upon prophets, who voiced His message. In the fullness of time, however, He prepared for Himself a Body which He indwelt completely, and we behold God dwelling upon this earth in the person of Jesus Christ. Here at last God has a body completely responsive to His will.

But God's human body is limited like ours. Jesus Christ in the flesh could be only at one place at one time. His voice could be heard by only a few thousand people at most, His feet could only travel a certain number of miles over this earth, His hands could be laid in healing and blessing upon only the tiniest fraction of the

human race. And yet, it is impossible to believe that God meant to confine these blessings to just a few human beings who happened to be living in Palestine in the first century and to deprive all the rest of mankind. "God is no respecter of persons." He loves His children outside of Palestine just as much as those within; and those of the twentieth century equally with those of the first. If, therefore, His message is to reach all men everywhere and throughout all time, He must have a body equal to the task. Such a body He has in His Church.

"It is expedient for you," said our Lord, "that I go away," which is as if He were to say: "My human body, though a perfect instrument of God so far as it goes, is unequal to the task. It is therefore better for you all that I should depart in this limited body and return in a more extensive body." This He did at Pentecost when upon the waiting disciples His Spirit came in full measure. Now, instead of a body with only one voice to proclaim the Good News, He has a hundred and twenty voices; instead of one pair of feet to run His errands, He has a hundred and twenty pairs of feet; instead of one pair of hands to heal and bless, He has a hundred and twenty pairs of hands. Here, then, in the infant Church, we have the birth of that larger and more extensive body which is to be His instrument for carrying on His work. Viewed in this way it is truly Christ's Body, an extension of His Incarnation.

From that day to this that Body has grown as new members have been added by Baptism, which joins them

to the Body, St. Paul tells us, just as grafting unites a branch to a tree. The union is so close that all baptized persons become actual members of the one Body of which Christ is the Head. To put it very simply, Christians are the hands, feet, eyes, voice of this Body which God created and which He needs as His instrument to save the world. What a wonderful privilege this is and what a great responsibility it places upon us!

If we once grasp its true nature, the Church is no mere voluntary association of believers, nor are its responsibilities mere "extras" added to the other duties of Christians. Rather it is an essential and inevitable part of the Christian's life. It is Christ's own creation on which He depends for the carrying out of His plans. It is in literal truth His Body and without it He does no mighty works. Does God wish His message preached to the heathen in China or Africa? Of course. But He does not do it by some miracle or through an angel messenger. Instead, He waits until some members of His Body afire with His love say, "Here am I, send me." Does He want to cleanse our slums and purify our politics? Yes, but He does not do it until some of His children aflame with a passion for social justice offer themselves for the task.

In short, the amount of work He does in any country is dependent on the character and condition of the Church. When the Church is vigorous and spiritual, society improves. When the Church becomes worldly and corrupt, society degenerates. The principles of Jesus take root in pagan lands only when they are planted and watered by the Church. The Gospel would

never have gotten out of Palestine into Europe, nor out of Europe into England, nor out of the Old World to us of the New, had not the Church sent it; nor will it make any further advance in the days to come except in and through the Church. In short, the welfare and progress of the Christian religion is absolutely dependent on the Church.

This being the case, let us be very sure that we ourselves are strong, vital, active, and useful members of the Church, which is His Body.

Christ has no hands but our hands
To do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet
To lead men in His way;
He has no tongues but our tongues
To tell men how He died;
He has no help but our help
To bring them to His side.

THE CHURCH AN ORGANIZATION

THE CHURCH is both an organism and an organization—the Body of Christ and the Church Militant, a definite, visible, organized, and historic institution which is God's instrument for bringing the Kingdom. Our Blessed Lord wrote no book, built no school, led no army; but He did found a Church or spiritual society to which He gave great promises and on which He laid grave responsibilities. This is quite clear in His reply to St. Peter: "Upon this rock I will build my Church." This promise was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, the birthday of the Christian Church. This infant Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, proceeded immediately to its task and Peter's first sermon resulted in the conversion of three thousand people who were immediately united to the Church by Baptism.

Note well that these converts did not form their own Church but instead became attached to a Church already in existence. Such was ever the New Testament method as clearly indicated by the Book of Acts, which states: "The Lord added to the Church daily those that were being saved." Converts were never merely individual Christians, nor did they form their

own Churches; instead, to be a Christian meant to be a member of the Church Christ founded. / You may search the New Testament in vain for any encouragement of man-made Churches. St. Paul, indeed, is very vigorous in his condemnation of those who thought of separating from the original Church. To "cause divisions," to break off from the Apostolic fellowship was for him the gravest sin. Had men continued to follow his advice in this, as they have done in other matters, we might have been spared all our unfortunate divisions today. Certain it is that Christ founded but one Church —"built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner stone."

This Church our Creed and Prayer Book describe as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. It has four "marks," signs, or characteristics by which it can be identified, namely, (1) an apostolic commissioned ministry, (2) the Bible as the standard of reference in all things belonging to salvation, (3) the Creeds as witnesses to the historic faith, and (4) the Sacraments as Christ hath commanded. Having already dealt at some length with the Creeds and Sacraments, I shall say here merely a few words about the Bible and the Ministry.

The Bible is our standard of doctrine. "The Church to teach, the Bible to prove" is the old motto and the sixth Article of Religion reads: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite

or necessary to salvation." This is a very important principle, the disregard of which has been the cause of all the divisions of Christendom. This principle is violated in two ways—by addition and subtraction. For example, the Roman doctrines of Papal infallibility and the Immaculate Conception are additions, innovations. So, while we do not object to Roman Catholics holding them as pious beliefs for themselves, we do object to any attempt to make them binding on all Christians, since they cannot be proved from Holy Scripture. On the other hand we equally resist all subtractions. Some, for example, have subtracted the Apostolic Ministry, plainly foreshadowed in the Acts and Epistles, and undisputed for at least fourteen hundred years of the Church's life. Others have subtracted Confirmation, a distinctly Biblical Institution, while doctrines of the Eucharist have been spread which deprive our Lord's words of institution of all meaning. Against all such additions or subtractions our Church protests, taking as its final authority in such matters the Divine word of God.

It is on this same ground that we adhere to the Apostolic Ministry. The Preface to our Ordination services states this clearly. "It is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been three Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church,—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." In the face of this we cannot accept the theory of a man-made ministry. Instead we hold that it is derived from the Apostolic commission given at Pentecost. Hence, the term "Apostolic Succession,"

which means that the Apostles ordained presbyters (or priests) and deacons, which Orders have continued to the present day, receiving their authority and commission from the Apostles themselves. In the Pastoral Epistles it is clear that St. Paul associated with himself Titus and Timothy, bidding them to ordain presbyters; and, while all the steps in these early days may not be perfectly traced, it is quite clear from the writings of Ignatius in the year A. D. 115 that these three Orders, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, then constituted the ministry of the Church and for fifteen hundred years this fact was never questioned. The burden of proof, therefore, rests on those who have departed from this ancient method, not on us who adhere to it.

In all of this we are not passing judgment on our fellow Christians, whose fathers doubtless had great provocation, but we cannot ignore the facts of history nor surrender our sacred trust, Moreover, we have a right to be deeply grateful that in all the stress and strain of Reformation times our Mother Church of England was enabled to retain the essential features of the ancient Catholic Church, chief among which we count an apostolically ordained and commissioned ministry.

This is a matter of no slight importance. As an old Bishop once said to me, "The question is, would you rather belong to an organization founded by Jesus Christ or to one founded by a mere man, however good he might be?" If the very organization which Christ founded still exists in the world, then it would seem that if people only knew and understood, they would not be satisfied to remain outside of it. There is in-

volved, moreover, the question of authority. An inward call is of course a necessity, but so is an outward commission, a fact which is recognized by every denomination of Christians. Some, however, trace such authority back only a few generations, or at most centuries, while ours goes back to the Day of Pentecost. It is a glorious thing to be a part of such a succession—not something to boast about but rather to regard with awe and humility and prayer that one may prove worthy and may not fail to pass on the torch undimmed.

The Sacred Ministry thus presents a vivid appeal to the imagination as well as an unparalleled opportunity of service to God and man. No time more than our own needs consecrated, capable, and learned clergy, and perhaps in no day have the opportunities and rewards been greater. To be sure, sacrifices are involved, but they are only of material things, while the rewards consist in the opportunity of giving light to multitudes in darkness, aid and comfort to sufferers, strength to the weak, counsel to the foolish, and peace and healing to sin-burdened souls, and in a thousand other ways laboring for and coöperating with God in the building of His Kingdom. There is crying need today for such laborers and builders, and it is a wonderful privilege to go forth to this task with a sure commission as a representative and ambassador of the Living God.

> The Lord wants reapers. Oh, mount up
> Before death comes and says, "too late."
> Stay not for taking scrip or cup,
> The Master hungers while ye wait.

DUTIES OF MEMBERS

TWO SETS of duties fall upon every man because he is both an individual and a social being, a person and a member of society. Every man has a duty to himself—to make the best possible self he can. He also has a duty to the other selves with whom he is in contact. As a citizen, he has duties to the State; as a club member, to his club; as a student, to his college; and as a Churchman, to his Church. It is these corporate duties we are to consider now. "What is your bounden duty as a member of the Church?" the Prayer Book asks and answers. "My bounden duty is to follow Christ: to worship God every Sunday in His Church: and to work and pray and give for the spread of His Kingdom." Following, worshiping, working: personal devotion, public worship, and active service, these three summarize the duties of every Christian or Church member.

To follow Christ means that we are to endeavor in every way to pattern our lives after His, to do always what He would have us to do, to seek always His approval—to act in the home, at school, in business, in society always in such a way that He would approve. This task is so utterly impossible of achievement by our own efforts that, if we are really earnest in our en-

deavor, we are inevitably driven to God for help. This means that we must pray earnestly and constantly, must read and meditate upon His Holy Word, must examine ourselves in His presence, repent of our sins and failures; and, making full use of all the means of grace, do our utmost to avoid them in future. In these and other well-tried ways we endeavor to keep close to our Lord, to be aware of His presence, to count on His help, to rest in His love. So doing we shall experience the truth of the lines of that familiar and much loved hymn:

> Finding, following, struggling, keeping
> Is He sure to bless?
> Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs
> Answer, Yes!

Worship is not a luxury but a duty, not merely a voluntary act but something commanded. One of the greatest weaknesses of our Church arises from the fact that so few people realize this. Yet a few moments' reflection makes it abundantly clear. The Fourth Commandment is as binding as any of the others. We have no right to select those portions of the Divine Law we expect to keep. All are binding or none. If, therefore, God has commanded us to worship Him publicly on His day, we are bound to obey. Failure so to do is sin. In this regard the consciences of Churchmen need to be quickened.

Staying away from Church without very serious reason is a sin and perhaps a greater sin than most people realize. All other sins are only indirectly against God,

being directly against ourselves or our fellow men, while refusing to go to our Father's house on His invitation is a direct slight or insult. It is flaunting His honor and deliberately slighting Him before men. Surely, that is no light or trivial thing!

Abstinence from Public Worship is also a sin against the Church and a hindrance to the progress of the Kingdom. One has only to consider the logical extreme to realize that if everyone stayed away from Public Worship, the Church would soon cease to exist. Consequently every failure in some measure weakens the cause. The Church on its human side is a brotherhood or fellowship of persons bound together in a common enterprise. How can fellowship exist or the enterprise succeed unless the brethren meet together frequently and regularly? On the other hand, regular and conscientious Church attendance, on principal and regardless of weather or guests or feelings, exerts an influence difficult to overestimate. It is the layman's opportunity of preaching a sermon in deed and giving silent but visible and potent witness to his faith. It is a means of confessing Christ openly before men and thus meriting the promise of our Lord: "Whoso confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven."

The following pertinent anecdote is told in *Lights and Shadows of a Long Episcopate*. "The Emperor Napoleon said one day to Dr. Theodore Evans (warder of the American Church in Paris), 'Next Sunday there will be a fête at the palace, and we shall expect you to be present.'

"Dr. Evans replied: 'Sire, on that day I serve another King.'

" 'But,' said the Emperor, 'suppose I send for you to do some work for me?'

" 'Sire,' was the answer, 'if it is to relieve pain, I shall go, but if it is to do work which can be done as well another day, I cannot go. If not loyal to my God, I shall not be loyal to my sovereign.'

"Napoleon responded: 'Monsieur Evans, I respect America more than ever before.' "

Would not the modern world respect the Church more than ever before if all Christians were as conscientious in the matter of Public Worship?

Active Service is the third duty of every Christian. By our Baptism we are committed to this, for recall what the Church says over every baptized child:

> We receive this Child into the congregation of Christ's flock; and do sign him with the sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end.

In the staff regulations of the British Army it states that every enlisted man has undertaken "a commitment to service." Is not that also true of the Church? Christians are "saved to serve." When our Lord called the disciples he also sent them forth, and today God does not call any of us simply to save our own souls but that we should in turn be instruments in saving others. No one ever heard of an army winning vic-

tories with simply the officers fighting. Neither will the Church win any worth-while victories until every member, those in the ranks as well as officers, laymen as well as clergy, is doing his part. The splendid successes of the early Church were due largely to the fact that every individual was an active and ardent worker for Christ. Every Churchman, therefore, should constantly and earnestly ask himself the question, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to *do?*"

An old legend relates that when our Lord returned to heaven after His ascension, the angels clustered about Him plying Him with questions as to His experience on earth and especially as to what plans He had made for carrying on His work, to which He replied that He had delegated this to His friends and disciples. "Oh," responded the angels in dismay, "that is a terrible risk. Those men are so weak and stupid and cowardly." "Yes," responded the Master, "it is a terrible risk, but it is the only plan I have."

Though but a legend, the story enshrines an eternal truth. God has committed His treasure to earthen vessels; He has made the success or failure of His plans for the world's salvation dependent on the coöperation of His children. What sublime confidence that shows in us and what a tremendous responsibility it places upon us! Let us do our utmost to deserve such trust and to help forward God's plan and purpose for the human race.

CONFIRMATION

CONFIRMATION is both a duty and a privilege; a duty, because it has been the custom of the Church from its earliest days, and a privilege because of the spiritual blessings it conveys.

There is much misunderstanding about Confirmation both within and without the Church, due doubtless in some measure to the form of the present Confirmation Office in our Prayer Book. It is therefore of great importance to set forth clearly its real nature, and perhaps this can best be done by first stating what it is *not*, and then, what it *is*.

Confirmation is not a mere form, such as one might find in the ritual of a lodge or club. The Church is not interested in mere forms and ceremonies, but only in such as have vital significance.

Confirmation is not "joining the Church." This is perhaps the commonest misconception. Parents are apt to say, "John is old enough to join the Church, so I think I will have him confirmed." Or an adult brought up in another Communion will remark, "I would like to be confirmed and so join your Church." All these statements are quite wrong. The Church holds today, as it did in the beginning, that people join the Church when they are baptized. Baptism is

the initiatory rite wherein they are made "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven." All validly baptized persons are members of the Church and consequently cannot "join" again.

Confirmation is not "renewing one's baptismal vows." Renewing such vows has really nothing whatever to do with Confirmation. This idea doubtless arises from the fact that renewal of vows is required at Confirmation, and the distinction between this renewal and Confirmation proper is not made very clear in our present Prayer Book. Turn, however, to the Prayer Book of Edward VI, the first Prayer Book in English, and you find no renewal of vows but instead the Church Catechism, and then follows Confirmation. If, therefore, you were to omit all that portion of the service having to do with the renewal of vows, you would in no way affect Confirmation. The Church has simply felt that, when her children seek the blessing of Confirmation, they should at that time renew their vows as an evidence of their fitness to receive the gift. But such renewal must not be confused with the gift, since it is only a preparation therefor.

We will never understand the nature of Confirmation until we have entirely put aside these erroneous ideas and others like them, such as that Confirmation is only for children or that it is a badge of sainthood meant only for those who are already good. The root trouble at the base of most of these false ideas is that people view Confirmation too often from the merely human side. They think of what *they* are going to do—confess Christ, renew vows, join the Church, and so forth,

when as a matter of fact the essential thing to remember about Confirmation is not what man does but what God does. It is not a human activity but a Divine gift. As our Prayer Book truly says, after renewing promises and declaring loyalty, "I receive the strengthening gifts of the Holy Spirit." So Confirmation is not something done but something received. The important thing about it is not man's part but God's.

Historically Confirmation appears to be the completion of Baptism. Originally both were administered together and still are in the Eastern Church where infants are confirmed immediately after they are baptized. (Surely this should dispose of the idea that Confirmation is renewing vows or any other merely human act.) In the Western branch of the Church, of which we are a part, Confirmation was gradually separated from Baptism and placed at a time when the child would have some apprehension of its significance. But this change of position involved no change of nature. Baptism and Confirmation may be conceived as two hemispheres which together make one whole. In the East they remain together today, while with us they have been drawn apart, but both are needed to make the whole sphere, and Baptism is really incomplete without Confirmation, a bit of evidence of this being seen in the fact that at Confirmation one may change one's baptismal name. Baptism and Confirmation are then complementary parts of one whole, namely, the process of becoming a full member of the Church of Christ.

Confirmation may be defined as a sacramental rite of Apostolic origin whereby through the Laying on of

Hands the Holy Spirit is given to baptized persons. As in Baptism and Holy Communion, there is here an outward sign and an inward grace, so that Confirmation is truly a sacrament, though it is called a lesser one as compared with the two great Sacraments which were instituted and enjoined by our Lord Himself. The subject for Confirmation must be a baptized person, the officiant an Apostle or one of the Apostolic order, that is, a Bishop; the matter or form is the laying on of hands, and the essence or gift, the Holy Spirit.

Confirmation as thus defined is of Scriptural and Apostolic origin and was practised apparently from the very beginning. In Acts 8: 14–17 we have the first account of Confirmation, written a very short time after our Lord's ascension. When Philip the deacon had made converts and baptized them, the Apostles sent two of their number, namely, "Peter and John: who when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost: . . . Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Other Scriptural references are to be found, notably Acts 9: 1–7 and Hebrews 6: 1–2. Thus it would seem that all persons who call themselves "Bible Christians" and want to do as people did in New Testament times would not only accept but demand Confirmation. Certain it is that one could not have been considered a Christian in the days of the Apostles without it.

There is, moreover, an unbroken line of testimony from the writings of the early Fathers and others from that day to this showing the undeviating practice of the historic Church. For fifteen centuries Confirmation

was administred to all and at the present day it is the practice of fully three-fourths of the Christian world. Surely, we may be grateful that our Church has preserved this rite in its spiritual and apostolic purity and simplicity.

It is, of course, not merely a matter of historical and doctrinal interest, but of the most practical concern. The word "confirm" means "to strengthen," and surely we all need that. In our efforts to lead a Christian life, we need all the help we can get and Confirmation is one of the ways God has promised through His Church to strengthen us "by His Spirit in the inner man." It is really like an ordination to the priesthood. In fact it has rightly been called "the ordination of the laity," that is, the solemn setting apart of the layman with the bestowal of power to enable him to "do his duty in that state of life into which it has pleased God to call him."

Of course here, as in all sacraments, man must do his part. There is nothing magical or miraculous about the gift such as will make a person virtuous without effort. On the contrary, it is possible to lose this precious gift simply by neglect. It seems to be a law of life that what we don't use, we lose. This applies to our bodies, minds, and souls. We must, therefore, as St. Paul advises, do our utmost to "stir up the gift of God" that is in us by daily endeavor to live a good life, by daily contact with God in prayer and Bible reading, and by frequent reception of the Holy Communion. By so doing we shall "daily increase in His Holy Spirit more and more," until we come unto His Everlasting Kingdom."

THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

MULTITUDES of people do not appreciate or understand the Christian sacraments simply because —either through indolence, or false teaching, or a mistaken reverence—they consider them as so unique and different from God's usual methods of working in His universe that they somehow or other "don't quite see the use of them." They loyally submit to them with a sort of blind acquiescence because Christ commanded it, but they would not miss very much if they did not. The sacraments to them are simply beautiful and impressive forms, and if that be the full truth respecting them, one cannot blame such persons for their lack of interest. Such a point of view seems as unchristian as it is unreasonable. The sacraments are either tremendous realities or they are nothing. The Master did nothing useless nor was He interested "in mere forms." Least of all, when, 'neath the shadow of the Cross He commands "Do this," would He be concerned with anything but the most vital realities. We are justified, therefore, in looking for some truly "inestimable benefit" to our souls in the sacraments of His ordaining.

It will accordingly be well worth while before treating of the sacraments themselves, to spend a little time

in endeavoring to grasp firmly the sacramental principle, which, it is not too much to say, is common to all life. This principle is simply the very evident fact that matter is the vehicle and instrument of spirit. All the universe is the expression of Divine Spirit in terms of matter, and man dwelling in a material world with which he comes into contact by means of a material body, discerns its meaning through his bodily faculties. Through the physical eye and ear does he acquire that knowledge which enables his quickened spiritual perceptions to recognize the handiwork of God. "The invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made." Matter is a vehicle and instrument of spirit.

Notice first how man uses matter as an instrument of spirit. Go into a wireless station, adjust the instrument to your ears, and you will hear a succession of long and short sound waves. You may make one of two possible inferences. On the one hand you may say: "I am only listening to the rhythmic beating of a vast eternal machine. There is no purpose, no meaning, only ether, electricity, and energy." On the other hand, knowing the code, you may note the intervals and recognize that another mind is trying to communicate with you. Perhaps the S O S signal beats upon the ear and the cold, lifeless ether becomes alive and throbbing with thought, on fire with the passion, fears, and hopes of men. Spirit is speaking with spirit as another personality energizes in the material universe, using matter as vehicle of mind.

Once again, stand by the loom in a factory. A card

pierced with a thousand holes is inserted in the whirring machine. The shuttle moves backward and forward, the wheels whirl, the threads cross and recross and intermingle in a wonderful sequence as a piece of cloth is woven, the pattern and color appearing here and there until at last there emerges complete the Stars and Stripes —the symbol of a mighty nation for which men will suffer and die. Matter and energy will explain much, but an indispensable element is the personality behind which constructed and operates this complex machine to its predestined end. Spirit is using matter as a vehicle of expression.

Man's ordinary connection with his fellows is on this same sacramental basis. A hand clasp is but the contraction of the muscles in contact with matter, yet it may convey affection or sympathy too deep for words. A tear on the cheek is to the chemist simply H_2O and sodium chloride, but it may carry a message of joy or anguish, of pity or penitence. A mother's kiss may seem to be only the contact of dust with dust, yet it may be a sacrament of tender love such as will influence the direction of a life. Other instances might be given without number. Even the spirits who enter this sphere through the medium of our spiritualistic friend must perforce utilize matter by tipping a table, writing on a slate, or manipulating a ouija board! Indeed, all human experience teaches us that spirit comes in contact with spirit in this world of ours normally and usually through the medium of matter. Soul converses with soul through the physical medium of the human voice. Pleasure is indicated by a smile, anger by a frown, and

affection by a kiss. What are these but sacraments of our daily life—means by which spirit expresses itself?

All nature is in a sense sacramental. The mountains, the sea, the sunset, the rose, and the stars have each their own message to convey, and to the man of vision "every common bush is aflame with God." To ignore or deny this, in the interests of a false spirituality, is to go contrary to our common experience as well as to the revelation of Holy Writ. When we once grasp this thought of the sacramental principle permeating all life, we are prepared to see the reasonableness and appropriateness of the Christian sacraments. Against this sacramental background, they take their natural places as part and parcel of God's universal method of working in this material world. "We are deaf and blind," says Sir Oliver Lodge, "to the immanent grandeur around us unless we have insight enough to appreciate the whole, and to recognize in this woven fabric of existence, flowing steadily from the loom in an infinite progress toward perfection, the evergrowing garment of a transcendent God." Truly we may say with Saint Athanasius that this wonderful universe is indeed "the body of God."

THE SACRAMENTS

THIS section of the Catechism must be read with much care. Each word and phrase is significant. If the first question were—as is sometimes loosely assumed—simply: "How many Sacraments are there?" then the answer would not be two or seven or twelve but twenty or seven hundred or twelve thousand, since the whole world is in its very nature sacramental. But the question is much more limited. "How many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in His Church?"; and the answer is absolutely correct: "Two only." These two, however, are of supreme and unique importance since they are "generally necessary to salvation," which must not be taken to mean simply necessary to enable us "to get to heaven." Salvation means rather a healthy condition of soul, a state of spiritual health and security. And how natural and fitting these Sacraments are: A man cannot be healthy in body if unwashed and unfed, though he may exist for a considerable time. Neither, says the Church, can a man be healthy in spirit without cleansing and nourishment. So we have the two great Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion, not as mere formal ordinances but as effective means of cleansing and refreshing our souls.

It is doubtful if a better definition of a Sacrament could be found than that in our Catechism. You may study all the learned theological treatises and you will come back from them all to accept the short, simple definition of a Sacrament as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given (or communicated) unto us." Constantly do we need the reminder that a Sacrament has *two* parts and that *both* are essential. To neglect or omit either is to destroy its true nature. This error is committed on the one hand by those who hold that the material part vanishes and only the spiritual remains and, on the other hand, by those who maintain that the material is all, being but a sign or symbol of spiritual things. The Catechism should save all churchmen from both these errors since it reiterates the fact that a Sacrament has *two* parts.

Moreover the definition goes on to say that a Sacrament is not only a sign but also "a means whereby we receive the same (i. e., the spiritual grace), and a pledge to assure us thereof." The outward part of a Sacrament, then, has a three-fold nature. It is a sign, a means, and a pledge. With those who hold it a sign or symbol we have no quarrel, for we must assert the same. A sign is something that points to something else, as, e. g., a flag, a cross, a sign-board. So the water and bread and the wine remind us of God and His relation to us. In Baptism we are reminded of the necessity of the "death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness," and in the Holy Communion we have vividly set before us His cross and passion, His precious death and burial, His glorious resurrection and ascension. Sacra-

ments are truly signs and symbols, but they are much more.

A means is something which conveys something else. A letter is a means of conveying a message; a pipe or wire, a means of conveying water or electricity. So whether we fully understand it or not (and who does?) we are plainly taught that in and through the Sacraments something is given. They are not mere human actions. Man does not do it all. Baptism is not simply pledging allegiance or recognizing our worship nor is the Holy Communion simply devoutly recalling the Atonement. Indeed the Spirit of God, which, like the wind, "bloweth where it listeth," by means of these material channels comes in fuller measure and for special purposes to the souls of His needy children. God is everywhere, to be sure, but we must find Him somewhere; and the Sacraments which Christ ordained are special points of contact with the Divine. Like the poor woman in the Gospel, millions of the faithful here touch the hem of His garment and are made whole.

A pledge is something that assures us of something else. When one pays a bill he gets a receipt as evidence of payment. In purchasing land in the olden times, the owner cut a bit of turf and cast it into the cap of the purchaser or tore off a branch of a tree and put it into the new owner's hand as a token that it was his. And today in buying a piece of property one takes a deed as evidence that it has been conveyed. What a merciful condescension to our weak human nature is this aspect of the Sacraments! Some few robust souls may have direct assurance of the forgiveness of sins, of

regeneration and union with God, but vast numbers of spiritually minded men are troubled with doubt on such matters and since the Kingdom of Heaven is not for a select few but for all, not for the learned and advanced only but for the backward and the ignorant, the good God has condescended to give assurance to weak and timid souls in concrete and tangible form. Provided man comes in penitence and faith and so fulfills his part of the covenant, he may be sure that God will do His; and to set all doubt at rest the visible, external part of the Sacrament is itself the evidence and pledge of the gift promised. How do I know I am born again? Not by my feelings but because I am baptized. How do I know I am in union with Christ? Because I receive the Holy Communion. Thank God we are not left for our assurance on these vital matters to our variable and fleeting feelings! Of course, it need hardly be said that this does not mean that the Sacraments work in mechanical fashion. Sad to say not all who receive the outward form receive the inward grace. But those who receive them properly—in sincerity and truth—have by that very act an assurance or pledge that the grace is given. All of which is but an illustration of the principle of the Incarnation, that God does not treat man as pure spirit but as spirit and body, not as perhaps some people think he ought to be but as he actually is. Verily, as says St. Agustine, "Proud man had perished had he not been found by an humble God."

THE TWO SACRAMENTS

THE two great Sacraments are so called because they were ordained by Christ and are generally—that is, as a rule for all men where they can be had—necessary to salvation, which does not mean merely getting into Heaven, but living here in a state of spiritual health and strength. Each Sacrament has two parts, an outward and an inward, the meaning of which we have already considered.

In Baptism the outward part is water and the mention of the three-fold name of God. The inward part is a new birth or regeneration, which is not to be confused with conversion. Birth is a vital process and can occur but once. Conversion means simply turning (from wrong to right) and may be repeated a thousand times. Baptism is the initial Sacrament, the means whereby one becomes a member of the Church, or as the Catechism puts it, "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven."

The requirements of Baptism are repentance of sin and faith or trust in God. Infants who cannot make these promises themselves make them through their sponsors or sureties, for the Church, in obedience to a true instinct, feels that no one is more fit for the King-

dom of Heaven than an innocent child. Those who deny children this privilege are doing them a wrong, and appear to be following the example of those who in our Lord's time would have kept the children away from Him, and whom He sternly rebuked, saying: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven," adding also, "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein."

The Lord's Supper has many aspects, typified somewhat by its various names. Two of these aspects are particularly stressed in the Catechism. In reply to the question, "Why was the Lord's Supper ordained?" the answer is, "For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits we receive thereby." The order here is worth nothing, for all too many Church people reverse it and think first and chiefly of the benefit to themselves. Indeed it is to be suspected that a large number think *only* of that —thus making this wonderful sacrificial service a purely selfish one for man's benefit only. Not so the Catechism, which would draw our minds away from self to the Sacrifice of the Cross. When we have offered that Memorial, and not till then, are we to think of what we receive. This Sacrament is first of all, then, a Memorial, a Eucharist—"our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving."

But it is not merely a Memorial of a dead Christ but of a risen and living Saviour, perpetually present in His Church. Many bitter controversies have been waged about the method of His Presence, but these need not

concern us here. Possibly we cannot do better than follow the example of Queen Elizabeth, who said, when asked what she understood by these mysterious words:

> Christ was the Word that spake it,
> He took the bread and brake it,
> And what that Word did make it,
> That I believe and take it.

After all, the *method* is of secondary importance as compared with the *fact*. That He is present in some form is denied by none except those who make of this Sacrament simply a symbol or memorial. The only alternative to the Real Presence is the real absence; and if in any manner we commune with Him, He must be present. The only thing on which the Church insists is that the Presence is not material but spiritual, that He is "spiritually taken and received by the faithful," and that the "means whereby we receive is faith." This, however, does in no sense imply that faith creates the Presence. The Christ is no figment of our devout imagination. He is there, awaiting us. Many, sad to say, merely come in contact with Him as did the crowds in Galilee, without apprehending Him or receiving His power into their lives, but now, as then, all those who in faith touch but the hem of His garment are made whole.

Of course, the fact that Christ is present in the Eucharist does not conflict in any way with His Universal Presence in the hearts of all believers. The sun is everywhere, but by means of a microscope it may be focused to the burning point. Electricity is every-

where, and always has been, but man may so harness it and direct it along a wire that it will light his cities and run his factories and trains. So, in some mysterious fashion, Christ, who is present everywhere, is present here for a special and particular purpose, as is recognized and realized by millions of His faithful and needy children. The Living Christ, with all His spiritual power, is really and truly present waiting and anxious to come in fuller measure into our souls and lives. Shall we not for "the strengthening and refreshing of our souls" say in glad response, "Oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for Thee"?

SACRAMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

THAT the present condition of affairs with regard to the Sacraments is far from satisfactory will be generally admitted. Vast numbers of Christian men and women know nothing at all about the sacramental life. From one year's end to the other they never approach the altar. They do not understand its meaning or value or seem to feel its need. If you were to ask them why they remain away they would probable tell you they "didn't see the use." Between the altar and the common man there seems to be a great gulf fixed. How is it to be bridged? Again, multitudes of earnest Christians come only at intervals and then as a sort of pious duty to God. They look upon Sacraments as mere ordinances or devout observances for occasional and special use, but with no vital bearing upon their daily lives. Frequently such persons will tell you they are "not good enough" to come to Communion; which reason, if sincere, betrays the most pitiful misconception of the sacramental idea, for Sacraments are no more meant to be signs of virtue than medicine is a sign of health. In short, the main point seems to be completely missed by the vast majority of persons. It seems scarcely to have entered their heads that one great purpose of the Sacraments is to help man.

But to perfect and develop our own characters is only a portion of our task. For the Christian, self-culture is not an end in itself but a means to a further end. His duty is not merely to be good but to be good for something; not simply to be a moral man, but an efficient fighter. He must fight not only the evil within but the evil without, and be concerned not so much with saving his own soul as with the saving of others. So far have we fallen away from this position that the whole Church needs nothing less than a complete re-orientation, a conversion from paganism to Christianity, from the theory that God is to be used for the individual's benefit to the conviction that God is to be obeyed and served for the furtherance of His own plans. Man is "saved to serve," and only as this becomes clearly and unfalteringly his aim can he realize the deep significance and value of the sacramental life.

For many, Sacraments are a sort of magic which commits God to certain acts mechanically and so relieves man of effort—a comfortable doctrine, truly, but scarcely adequate for Christians. Such a conception is not only magical but selfish. If the communicant's attitude is not merely a sort of "making up to God," an attempt to curry favor with Him for this world or the next, then it frequently exhausts itself in aspiration and desire for perfection of character which, though a noble aspiration as far as it goes, falls far short of the Christian ideal. It is selfishness still, though on a higher plane and little better on that account. Moreover such a point of view makes little appeal to the average man, who feels it scarcely worthy of God that He should be-

stow certain great blessings on a few people who come repeatedly to Him in the Sacrament and perhaps overlook others who are doing worth-while work in the world. If coming to the Communion is for the purpose of saving one's individual soul, then some of the best and noblest people in the world will pass it by and take their chance, continuing meanwhile their active and splendid service to their fellows.

The trouble with all these ideas is that they are not wholly wrong. They are indeed partly true. But these partial truths have usurped the whole field and obscured the real essential purpose of the Sacraments, which is not to minister to man's selfishness, but rather to evoke his sacrifice. As Father Carey well says: "The Sacraments are not charms to preserve us from the Evil One; they are modes devised by Christ whereby He can give us His presence as we make our pilgrimage through the difficult roads of life, and as we try to build His Kingdom faithfully."

We must, therefore, endeavor to interpret the Sacraments not only in terms of receiving but of giving, not in terms of individual welfare but of individual sacrifice. This stands out clearly at the institution of the Lord's Supper. No matter what other interpretations may be proper and legitimate, surely when our Lord takes into His hand the bread, and breaking it, says: "This is my body, do this"; and when He takes the cup, the New Covenant in His blood, and gives a similar injunction—He is not merely enjoining His followers to perform a certain rite or ceremony but, in the performance thereof, something vastly more vital. "Do

this," must mean, among other things, "Do this very thing I am doing; I am breaking my body and shedding my blood for the life of the world; go and do ye likewise. Spend and be spent to the uttermost in the service of mankind." Sacrificed life is being offered for sacrificing lives, and only as we come in the spirit of sacrifice are we able even dimly to discern the meaning and value of this wonderful mystery. From the selfish and comfortable and indolent its significance is forever hidden. To approach the Sacrament in such spirit is either utter blindness or blasphemy.

"To be a man," says Studdart Kennedy, "means to be a thinking creature, filled with the spirit of suffering and creative love which made him. The Sacrament is the means by which we become filled with that spirit. It is the heart, the blood center of the great army of men who, having seen and loved God in Christ, are resolved to fight for and suffer with Him unto death and beyond it. It is the appointed means and method of meeting God. We are ready to have our bodies broken and our blood shed in the great Christian warfare against wrong, and we come for the refreshing of our spirits that we may not shrink. That bread is the ration of a fearless, fiercely fighting army. The wine is the stirrup cup of a band of knights who ride out to an endless war."

A POINT OF VIEW

AFTER all, with regard to the Sacraments it is simply a point of view for which we are pleading, but a point of view that makes all the difference. Rightly viewed they become very vital things. They cease to be mysteries for the elect only, or privileges for the good and devout, and become instead food and strength for all honest fighters for the Kingdom. They are no longer magic to be used by the superstitious and fearful; but natural, though divine, means of sustenance for the honest and the brave. Their use is no mark of goodness, but an evidence of need, just as going to a physician is not evidence of health but of sickness and need of help. They are not simply privileges for the few, but opportunities for the many. They are not a fancy decoration, but an essential part of every fighter's equipment; not "an extra" in religion, but rather the regular thing for all. Without abating one whit the reverence with which they are, and should be, surrounded, they should become more common, simply because they are meant to meet our common needs. A realization of this will bring the Sacraments again into touch with life. All men need them; and if rightly taught, all men would in time come to recognize their need and gladly use the means of satisfying it.

We have failed because we have timidly put forth the lower appeal and have so ceased to arouse any enthusiasm. We have frantically endeavored to fill our churches, and have succeeded in emptying them. We have been calling men to save their own souls instead of calling them to fight and thus inevitably driving them—if we present the matter rightly—to the Holy Communion for sustenance. We urge men to come to service for the good it will do them, instead of calling them to service for the good they can do others. And, as always, the selfish has failed, and, worse still, has set the whole mind and activity of the Church in a wrong direction, until the Church of Christ has ceased in these days to act in any real sense as an army of the Living God and has degenerated into a respectable and harmless self-preservation society.

If ever again we become a fighting Church, in which every member, those in the ranks as well as those in command, has an essential part to play, then men will inevitably be driven to God for help and the chief means of grace, the Sacraments, will be honored and used by all. Each congregation would then gather Sunday by Sunday as a band of faithful soldiers wearied and wounded and spent with the fray and seeking divine help for its continuance. Impressed with the seriousness of the conflict and aware of the tremendous odds against which they must struggle, they would assemble as tired toilers seeking refreshment and rest, as weak mortals seeking divine strength, as discouraged disciples seeking courage from above, as wounded

soldiers seeking health for their wounds, and as valiant fighters needing rations and ammunitions for the fray. All this and much more has our great Commander in store for all His faithful soldiers and servants, and the chief means by which He bestows these gifts are the Sacraments of His appointment.

Thus viewed, the Holy Communion becomes instinct with vitality. It touches our lives in very practical and real fashion. It lifts us up to the heights where we not only "think God's thought after Him" but, in vital union with Him, carry on His work, His sacrificial work for the world's redemption. For the great underlying, essential meaning of this Divine Symbol is that God's body is forever broken, His blood forever shed in continuous sacrificial service and suffering, until that day comes when evil is no more, and the kingdoms of the world have in reality become the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ. Thus the Sacrament becomes both a symbol and a means whereby man aligns and unites himself with God in His outpouring of Himself for the salvation of the world. The most God-like thing in all the world is sacrificial service, and this is the great underlying and essential meaning of the Sacrament of His death, in this lies the one hope of mankind.

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